


ESSAY ON MILTON



by MACAULAY

Edited by A.P. Walker



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MACAULAY'S
ESSAY ON MILTON

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES, ETC.

BY

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PREFACE.

IN the opinion of the editor of this book, the function of the annotator of texts for secondary school use is to guide teacher and pupil in those paths of study which will make the reading of the text most fruitful in literary training and culture, and to furnish such an equipment of subsidiary information as shall minimize the pupil's expenditure of time in purely mechanical labor, such as the often baffling search for explanatory facts, and the reading of irrelevant matter. No editor should feel justified in adding to the number of annotated editions of standard works now extant, unless his own work embodies pedagogical principles which seem to him to be vital, but which he considers to be not sufficiently emphasized in other editions. Perhaps the editor may be pardoned for stating here, in a slightly altered form, certain pedagogical principles already set forth in the preface to his volume of *Selections from Milton's Paradise Lost*, principles which have guided him also in the preparation of this book.

The first of these is that *matters of merely incidental information should never be forced upon the attention of the reader*. In this book all such matter is set apart by itself, and arranged alphabetically, as in an encyclopædia or other work of reference. Thus only those who feel the need of that information in order to comprehend the text are led to consult this matter, and such pupils may readily obtain it.

The second principle is that *matters constituting an inter-related mass of facts, some knowledge of which the reader must possess before he can read the text intelligently, should be given to him, not in shreds and patches attached to single passages of the text, but as an organic*

whole, to be studied consecutively in its entirety before the reading of the text is begun. In the case of these essays, the knowledge absolutely requisite to an intelligent reading of the works is a knowledge of that series of historical events which serves as a background for the essayist's studies of men and events. The outline sketch of English history (p. xvi) should therefore be studied before the essay proper is read. If this is done, pupils will find but little occasion for looking up historical facts; but whenever a reference in the text to any historical event seems obscure to any pupil, he will find the facts needed for its explanation set forth in its relations to the movement of which it forms a part.

The third principle is that *the essential function of notes is to suggest to the student trains of thought, points of view, matter for reflection*, the results of which may serve as a basis for critical discussions with his teacher and his fellow-pupils in the classroom. In other words, the notes should not give to the pupil all that a trained reader would find in the work, but they should stimulate him to get for himself all that is of value, by calling to his attention its precious quality, and by pointing the way to its attainment.

But is not the pupil robbed of much useful discipline in research by a type of editing which offers so much material between the covers of a single book, and is not the teacher robbed of opportunities that rightfully belong to him, by notes that ask many of his questions in advance? No; both are merely relieved of an element of drudgery in their work, whereby they may the more joyously traverse together a path where the interest is varied and inexhaustible.

The text is that prepared by Macaulay for the first collected edition of his essays.

A. P. W.

BOSTON, January, 1900.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE	iii
INTRODUCTION	
Macaulay's Life (Outline)	vi
Suggestions for Study	ix
Historical Introduction (English History from 1603 to 1689)	xvi
Chronological Table of Milton's Life and Contemporary Events	xxvii
Bibliography (Macaulay and Milton)	xxviii
THE ESSAY ON MILTON	I
NOTES — Illustrative and Explanatory	73
Critical and Suggestive	88
QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW	100
EXPLANATORY INDEX	103

BIOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE OF MACAULAY'S LIFE AS RELATED TO HIS PRINCIPAL LITERARY WORK.

- 1800 He was born at Rothley Temple, Leicestershire, England.
25 Oct. His father was a Presbyterian clergyman, his mother a Quaker. In early childhood he was an insatiable reader. After the year
- 1812 He began his formal education by attending a private academy.
- 1818 He entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where he won distinction for brilliant work in all studies except mathematics. He was associated with the college for more than seven years (Craven University Scholar, 1821; B.A., 1822; Fellow, 1824). (Contributions to *Knight's Quarterly Magazine*, 1822; *Essay on Milton*, 1825.) Having determined to pursue the profession of law, in
- 1826 He was called to the bar, but devoted much of his time to literature, as his *Essay on Milton*, contributed to the *Edinburgh Review*, had gained him instant popularity. To that magazine he contributed regularly for several years. (*Essays on Machiavelli*, 1827; *Dryden*, January, 1828; *History*, May, 1828; *Hallam's History*, September, 1828, etc.)
- 1830 He entered Parliament as a Whig member for Calne, on the nomination of Lord Lansdowne. He immediately became an ardent advocate of political reforms, and added to his reputation as a writer that of an orator. His literary activity was not diminished by his new duties (*Essays on Bunyan*, December, 1830; *Byron*, June, 1831; *Johnson*, September, 1831; *Mirabeau*, July, 1832; *Walpole*, October, 1833, etc.), while his political services to the cause of

reform won him the suffrages of the city of Leeds in the elections of 1832, and the gratitude of the Whig leaders.

1833 He was made Secretary of the Board of Control. In the same year his speech on a Bill for the Government of India proved his exhaustive acquaintance with the conditions and needs of that country. Accordingly he was appointed a member of the Supreme Council of India and its legal adviser, at a salary of £10,000 a year.

1834 He went to India in this capacity, and devoted his powers to solving administrative problems and to formulating a Code of Laws for India, his literary gifts meanwhile finding but little expression. (*Essays on Mackintosh's History*, 1835; *Bacon*, 1837.) Having saved from his ample income a sum sufficient to relieve him from anxiety for the future, in

1838 He returned to England, and was soon elected to Parliament as a member for Edinburgh.

1839 He became Secretary of War in the ministry of Lord Melbourne. On the accession to power of the Tories in

1841 He became an active member of the Opposition to Peel. He resumed his frequent contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*. (*Essays on Clive*, 1840; *Leigh Hunt*, *Lord Holland*, *Hastings*, 1841; *Frederick the Great*, 1842; *Madame D'Arblay*, *Addison*, 1843, etc.) Meanwhile he tempted fortune in a new line of literary activity (*Lays of Ancient Rome*, 1842), and also prepared the first collected edition of his *Essays* (1843).

1846 He became Paymaster of the Forces in the new Whig ministry of Russell. In the election of the succeeding year, he was rejected by the voters of Edinburgh because of his independent attitude on religious and other questions. This defeat left him free to prosecute the work which he had long designed to make the crowning literary production of his life, the *History of England from the Accession of James I.* (Vols. I. and II., 1848).

1852 He was reelected Member of Parliament for Edinburgh without any canvass on his own behalf, but resigned his seat four years later, as the completion of his *History* was still

his foremost consideration (Vols. III. and IV., 1855), and his failing health warned him that he must set a limit to his activities. In recognition of his services to the state in so many fields of labor, in

1857 He was elevated to the peerage as "Baron Macaulay of Rothley." Besides his labors upon the *History*, he now found time to contribute to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* a series of biographies of eminent men (*Atterbury*, 1853; *Bunyan*, 1854; *Goldsmith*, *Johnson*, 1856; *William Pitt*, 1859). His health, although failing, gave no serious cause of alarm until in

1859 He died of disease of the heart, and was buried in the Dec. 28 "Poet's Corner" in Westminster Abbey, at the foot of the monument to Addison.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE STUDY OF THE ESSAY.

I. THE STUDY OF A TYPE.

The student of literature, like the student in any branch of natural science, will profit by his studies only so far as he learns *what to observe*. His untrained mind fails at first to attend to those elements of the work that are vital, being easily distracted by non-essentials, and incapable of selecting from the body of matter presented the portions which, from their greater importance, should command special attention. Thus his perception of values is blurred, and he fails to receive and assimilate the mental nourishment which the author has set before him. This assimilation, however, will be very greatly hastened if he will first acquaint himself with the *purpose* aimed at and the *methods* pursued by the author in the production which forms his subject of study, just as he would examine a building with a clearer comprehension, and criticise it with a sounder judgment, if he knew that the architect had adopted the Gothic or the Romanesque type of architecture as a basis of treatment, and that he had designed the building for a library, an opera-house, or a state capitol. The student of Macaulay's *Essays*, then, will gain much by first ascertaining the *genesis* and the *nature* of the *literary essay*. General principles of literary study.

The word "Essay," as the name of a literary type, must not be confounded with the word in its other senses. Pope uses it (*Moral Essays*) as a title for a didactic poem; Locke uses it (*Essay Concerning Human Understanding*) as a title for an exhaustive philosophical treatise; but these are by-uses of the word. The genesis of the typical literary essay is of the following character: A writer of a reflective temper of mind undertakes to treat in literary form some subject in history, letters, manners, morals—in fact, any phase of intellectual or physical life—not primarily because he wishes to instruct the reader, but because Elements of an "Essay."

he perceives that the theme is capable of *artistic treatment*. As scenes in nature suited to be put into a picture are recognized as being picturesque, so this subject seems to him literatesque.¹ About this subject he allows his fancy to play, approaching it from various *points of view*, enriching it with *ornaments* supplied by wit and fancy, perhaps straying into *disgressions* upon topics related to the main theme only by remote chains of association, and combining all these elements into an harmonious *structure* that exhibits a distinct unity and orderly relation of parts, even when most informal. All this discussion he confines within such limits as will permit of its being perused at a single brief sitting, so that it may convey a certain *unity* of impression. Thus is produced the "Essay," a literary type which the reader may confidently expect to be distinctive in its *choice of subject* (any object which is of interest to the observant mind), its *temper* (reflective and critical), its *method* (a survey from shifting points of view), its *scope* (limited), and its *purpose* (to interest and please by its æsthetic quality).

2. THE STUDY OF A PARTICULAR AUTHOR.

Distinctive character of Macaulay's essays. The *Essays* of Macaulay, however, are not of the purely literary type. His works, classed as essays, constituted a distinct departure from the norm established by his English predecessors,—Bacon, Addison, Steele, and Johnson. They

are really brief historical treatises, designed to furnish instruction as well as entertainment. Therefore the facts constituting the subject-matter (which are generally subordinated to the literary treatment) here rise in relative importance, and the truth of his assertions of fact and the validity of his deductions from them become a matter of vital interest to the student. Thus, the *Essay on Milton*, ostensibly a review of his life and work, is made by Macaulay to serve as a vehicle for his special contributions to the theory of poetic composition, and to the history of the Puritan movement in England, while that on *Addison* aims primarily to analyze in a scientific spirit the political and social conditions that shaped Addison's work, and to clear up certain disputed points in

¹ W. Bagehot, *Literary Studies*, Vol. II., 341.

regard to Addison's relations with his contemporaries. In sum, Macaulay's aim is rather to present objective facts to the reader, than to share with him the play of his fancy about them. Furthermore, the nature of his subjects, and the character of the publication to which the *Essays* were contributed, caused him to extend their limits much beyond those ordinarily recognized as suitable to an essay. A recognition of these peculiarities must have its due effect in determining the method of study to be applied to Macaulay's *Essays*. While their literary form will present features of marked interest, the subject-matter will claim more attention than in essays designed simply to please.

3. ELEMENTS WHICH SHOULD COMMAND ATTENTION.

(a) *Subject-matter.*

As has been intimated above, only a trained reader can receive all that a skilful writer like Macaulay has it in his power to give.

First in order of thought, of course, are the facts and the opinions which constitute his contribution to the world's Primary topics. thought on the subject. The reader who, after reading the *Essay on Milton*, cannot state what Macaulay believed to be the distinctive gift in virtue of which Milton's work differs from that of any other poet, or what opinion he held in regard to Milton's political attitude toward the Cromwell régime, or what he considered to be the marked difference between Milton's work and that of Dante, — that reader has wholly failed to accomplish the immediate purpose for which he reads.

If these fundamental judgments of the author are not certain to be retained in the memory without special effort, Related topics. still less so are those portions which constitute digressions from the main thought. These are often of great importance, since they are likely to treat of matters of which the essayist can speak with especial authority, and which he therefore welcomes a pretext for introducing into his essay. For example, the untrained reader is likely to forget that in the *Essay on Milton* occurs a long digression treating of the relation of poetry to civilization (§s 10 to 18), a brief but scathing arraignment of the corrupt court of the

Restoration (§ 78), an elaborate character study of Charles I. and of the Puritan party (§s 53 to 63), and a disquisition on the method of expressing the supernatural in terms of the physical world (§s 37 to 43); for all these are skilfully woven into the tissue of the essay without the slightest impairment of its unity and coherence. They should command special attention for this latter reason, if for no other.

The most direct result, then, of the study of Macaulay's *Essays* should be the vitalizing of the pupil's knowledge of two great periods of history, and the stimulating of his power of reflection upon historical events and tendencies through his critical scrutiny of Macaulay's judgments of men and events.

(b) *Structure.*

Method of
acquiring
retentive
powers.

The writer has become convinced, by long experience with pupils, that this mastery over "what the essayist has to say" is most readily obtained by tracing the original process of thought pursued by the author in constructing his essay,—by analyzing what he has synthesised. But it is to be noted

that a good topical analysis must not only express the successive thoughts, but also exhibit their logical relations. Such an outline as the one framed by Carlyle, to be published in connection with his *Life of Burns*,¹ illustrates very forcibly the irregular and fragmentary habit of thinking which constitutes a distinct fault in Carlyle's mental procedure, and consequently in his literary work. Such an outline can do little to aid the reader in securing a structural view of the essay; for the main divisions of thought, the relation of subordinate to primary ideas, and the development of an idea from a preceding one are not exhibited either by the form or by the phraseology of the outline with sufficient clearness to render it valuable as

Value
of this
method.

an aid to the memory. But a correct analytical study of literary structure is doubly disciplinary,—it fits the pupil, when in the attitude of a listener, to receive the thoughts which great authors have to convey, and, when in the attitude of a speaker, to impart his ideas, and both with a clarity and com-

¹ See Carlyle's *Life of Burns*, Edited by A. J. George. (Heath.)

prehensive reach of thought unknown before. For in the former case, through this habit of observing successive changes of subject and their logical connection, his mind follows lectures, debates, and all spoken discourse with perfect grasp of the whole and its component parts, and he is able to reproduce them with great fulness and accuracy; while in the latter case (since like begets like) his own forms of expression begin to exhibit the same clear, orderly, systematic qualities which he has found to be characteristic of the work of all good writers.

In view of the large amount of ground to be covered, and the necessarily limited time that can be given to this phase of study, it is hardly likely that pupils can find time to perfect a detailed analysis of the entire text of one of Macaulay's essays. For this reason, and in order to make the pupil's initiation into this study of structure quite simple, enabling him to grasp readily the proper method of structural analysis, the text has been partially analyzed by the editor, enough analytical work, however, being left undone to allow practice by the pupil, who should prepare a detailed analysis of the essay, in which, by suitable indentation, the relation of each subordinate topic to some more comprehensive one should be indicated. When this analysis has been satisfactorily completed, the student will have in his possession a compacted framework or skeleton of Macaulay's subject-matter, to which, through the process of mental association, he can easily attach the specific facts and judgments which constitute Macaulay's contribution to the reader's knowledge of the person or subject under discussion.

The models in this book, and their use.

(c) *Form.*

Macaulay is noteworthy for his limited use of superficial ornament. He employs similes, metaphors, and the more artificial figures of speech very sparingly. It will be found that he rarely makes use of these figures (as do the poets) for the purpose of creating beautiful pictures in the mind. His similes are merely devices for securing clearness and vigor of impression. The comparisons are drawn almost wholly from historical and literary

External ornament.

sources, not from the imaginary scenes to which the poet commonly has recourse. But he is enabled, by his prodigious memory, so easily to recall the details of such facts that he repeatedly makes the mistake of assuming a like power in his readers, and thus his illustrations are sometimes more obscure than the point upon which they assume to throw light. So numerous are his historical allusions that the student is not recommended to attempt to trace them in detail.¹

Structural
ornament.

In the dress of his *Essays*, Macaulay relies for elegance not upon the jewels of speech, but upon the form and texture of his work. In his paragraphs, the opening sentences either clearly announce the subject, or serve as transitional passages from one topic to another. Unity is preserved with scrupulous care. He employs long and short sentences in judicious alternation. He makes use most frequently of the "periodic" structure, in which the thought is held in suspense for an appreciable time, in order that it may then be carried onward and upward to a dramatic climax. He also delights in the "balanced" sentence. Indeed, the love of contrast was developed in him so strongly as almost to constitute a fault; and it is to be feared that occasionally his opinion, or at least the expression of his opinion, was determined by the possibility of setting forth some brilliant rhetorical antithesis.

4. FRUITS OF THIS METHOD OF STUDY.

Applica-
tion to the
study of
rhetoric.

It follows from these observations that one of the fruits of the study of Macaulay's *Essays* should be the vitalizing of the pupil's knowledge of rhetorical principles. In them he may study, not passages artificially constructed by a pedagogue to exemplify a rule of procedure, but the living, effective messages framed by a man for the purpose of interesting and convincing

¹ The question of how thoroughly pupils should be expected to investigate the allusions contained in a literary work is so much a matter of dispute that the editor is tempted to utter a word of advice or caution. In Macaulay's works the allusions are abundant and recondite. They consist largely of matters of special knowledge, quite outside of any general literary equipment; and in his case, at least, the student of secondary school grade should not expend time and strength in investi-

his fellow-men — the written product, from which through observation the rules of effective expression may be derived. If through Macaulay's example the pupil should be inspired to endeavor to make his own written expression more coherent, orderly, direct, clear, vigorous, the study of these essays would need no further justification. If, in addition to this, his power of retaining and using historical information should be strengthened, if his mind should be stored with vividly conceived scenes and characters highly significant in the history of his race, and if above all, his æsthetic nature should be awakened to respond to the charm which good literature exerts over the cultivated mind, so that he might enter into a more complete life through his study of good literature, — then only would he have utilized to the full the opportunities for culture which these *Essays* present.

gating an allusion if the expression of which it forms a part is clearly understood in its meaning and its bearing upon the subject of discussion. Of all the lines of investigation suggested by any of Macaulay's *Essays*, the most profitable is not the investigation of allusions, but the reading of illustrative passages from the works of the author who is the subject of criticism.

SKETCH OF ENGLISH HISTORY, 1608-1688.

I. THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT.

Form of government. At the time of Milton's birth, Elizabeth, the last of the Tudor monarchs of England, had been dead five years. The fabric of government which she bequeathed to her successors, the Stuart monarchs, was essentially feudal in form. The principle of hereditary governed the descent of the crown, and the nation was divided into three social classes, on lines determined by feudal conditions: the nobility (or peerage), the lesser aristocracy (or knight-hood), and the commons.

Parliament. The *legislative* power resided in Parliament, the upper house of which contained all hereditary nobles ("Lords Temporal") and all archbishops and bishops of the national church ("Lords Spiritual"), while the lower house contained representatives from each county ("Knights of the Shire") and from each lesser political unit or borough ("burgesses"). Owing to a system of restrictions on suffrage and to the fact that the land was owned largely by nobles whose tenants were entirely subservient to their wishes, the election of many members was wholly a matter of form, they being merely the appointees of the owner of the borough.

The king's ministers. The *executive* work of the government was intrusted by the monarch to officials appointed by him on the ground of their ability, or of their subservience to his wishes, or too often of their personal acceptability alone.

The Privy Council. The Privy Council had been originally a small body of the most eminent nobles, who were summoned by the monarch to give him special advice upon matters of state policy. Included in it were the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Lord Chief Justice, the Lord Treasurer, the two Archbishops of the State Church (see p. xvii), the Lord Steward, the Lord Chamberlain, the

Earl Marshal, etc. Thus it contained elements from the departments of Finance, Justice, etc., and a permanent group of high executive officers, mostly appointive, but some (*e.g.* archbishops) members by virtue of their office. It modified the king's arbitrary power by refusing the seal (see Index) to royal orders of which it disapproved, but as its members were almost all subject to removal from their offices, it presented no insurmountable obstacle to the king's will.

The Privy Council had risen to great importance under the Tudors, first by gaining control of certain territory, and later by assuming the right to issue proclamations, to create courts, and to exercise judicial powers in cases of supreme importance in the state.¹ Thus the Stuart monarchs found in the Privy Council a strong weapon of tyranny when it was subservient to the Crown, and a powerful barrier to tyranny when ranged in defence of the established rights of the nation.

Among the political changes which had been brought about during the reign of the Tudors had been a revolt from the government of the Church of Rome, resulting in the establishment of a new ecclesiastical organization (the Church of England) as a department of the state. Parliament had enacted laws to the effect (1) that the creed of this church should consist of "thirty-nine articles" (or statements of religious dogma), then first formulated; (2) that its supreme government should reside in the monarch, as chief executive; (3) that its worship should conform to a prescribed ritual, then first composed; (4) that its membership should include all the citizens of the state; and (5) that its property and revenues should be administered through the agency of the state. Adherence to this church and conformity with its practice had been made universally compulsory.

But this revolt under the Tudors had been merely one expression of a general spirit of independence that prevailed throughout the nation. Many Englishmen still adhered to the authority of the Roman Church, many disagreed with some of the religious theories contained in the Thirty-nine Articles. Thus there arose a large body of disaffected people, who

The State
Church.

Act of Uni-
formity.

Rise
of "Dis-
senter."

¹ While thus engaged it was called the Court of High Commission.

strove in one way or another against the State Church. One body (the Puritans) developed within the pale of the church, through the action of clergymen who, while accepting in the main the results of the recent revolt, wished to "purify" the doctrines of the church of what they considered to be errors, and to "purify" its worship of many rites and practices inherited from the Roman Catholic régime. These Puritans, the Catholics, and divers other persons of independent views, constituted a body of rebels against the authority of the state in religious matters; thus a group of sects ("Dissenters") appears in England, suffering greatly from the persecutions of state officials, but recruiting their numbers steadily, especially from the ranks of the commoners. At first,

Presby-
terians. most of the Puritans looked with favor upon a democratic form of church government, which had been evolved by John Calvin, in Geneva, in which the churches, instead of

being controlled by the state officials, would be united in a sort of federation, and governed by representative bodies, called "Presbyteries." Many others advocated extreme individualism in religion

Inde-
pendents. —the voluntary formation of single churches, wholly self-controlled. Thus arose the two great Protestant dissenting sects of Presbyterians and Independents (known alike as "Non-conformists" to the ordinances of the state in religious matters), the latter of which ultimately attracted to itself the most aggressive Puritans, and gained an ascendancy in public affairs.¹

2. THE EARLY STUART MONARCHS, 1603-1649.

The reign of the Tudors in England having come to an end by the death of Elizabeth, the "Virgin Queen," last of the direct line, the

James I. succession devolved upon James Stuart (James I. of Eng-
land), the great-grandson of her father's sister Margaret,
Personal who had married the king of Scotland. Thus, between
union of 1603 and 1707, the same monarchs reigned over the king-
England doms of England and of Scotland, although the kingdoms
and were wholly distinct, each being governed according to its
Scotland. own fundamental constitution through its own Parliament.

¹ See p. xx.

A peculiarity of the early Stuart monarchs of England was their adherence to the doctrine of "the divine right of kings." This doctrine, in brief, was that an hereditary monarchy is a divinely instituted form of government; that a monarch is, therefore, responsible to God alone for the way in which he governs his realm; and that, while he should aim to rule solely for the good of his subjects, they have no right to bid defiance to his edicts or to reject him when his government becomes obnoxious to them.

Very early in his reign James showed his arbitrary temper by his determination, in spite of strong popular disapproval, to enforce the Act of Uniformity (see p. xvii) upon all Puritans and Catholics. This tyranny gave rise to the abortive Gunpowder Plot to assassinate the king and the leaders of the State Church by blowing up the Houses of Parliament at the opening session on November 5, 1605, a day which has since been celebrated with rejoicings for the salvation of the monarch and the church.

To his dogged insistence upon the theory of divine right the second Stuart monarch, Charles I., ultimately sacrificed his life. He quarrelled continuously with his Parliament in regard to the revenues and expenditures of the nation. He was compelled to summon Parliaments in order to procure money to carry out his schemes in regard to European politics, which involved wars with foreign nations; but finding that each Parliament resolutely insisted upon securing a redress of wrongs inflicted by the monarch upon the nation, he dismissed two of these almost as soon as they were assembled. The third Parliament attempted to delimit the field of battle by presenting a statement of fundamental principles governing the relations of the king and the people, called the Petition of Right, whose import can be expressed as follows: "It is illegal for the king (1) to levy money arbitrarily; (2) to imprison arbitrarily; (3) to billet soldiers on citizens; (4) to apply martial law to civil cases." By ratifying this petition, Charles appeared to admit the claims of its authors; but he continued to exact money illegally, and a new protest by Parliament was followed by its dissolution.

"Divine
right" of
kings.

Gunpow-
der Plot.

Tyranny of
Charles I.

The
Petition of
Right.

For eleven years the king governed without a Parliament, employing such devices as the sale of monopolies, forced loans, and the levying of ship-money. This, which was theoretically the tax levied in times of war upon seaports for their own defence, was now levied upon every town in the kingdom in times of peace. John Hampden tested its legality by refusing to pay his tax of twenty shillings, but the courts decided against him. The attempt to procure an income through arbitrary taxation proving a failure, the king was forced again to summon a Parliament in 1640. This body speedily passed a bill depriving the king of his power of dissolving Parliament, and thus assured itself of a long tenure of power, that ultimately won for it the name of the Long Parliament.

To these political causes of alienation between monarch and people the intensifying element of religious differences had not been wanting. Through his minister, Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, Charles had endeavored to crush out Puritanism within the church, to increase in every way possible the features in which the English and the Roman churches stood on common ground, and to extend the domain of the Established Church over both his kingdoms, to the utter rooting out of Presbyterianism. This last attempt alienated practically the entire Scotch nation from his cause, and led to their adoption of the famous "Solemn League and Covenant" to defend the Presbyterian religion.

The king's repeated acts of tyranny finally provoked a civil war between the monarch, upheld by most of the nobility, and the lower House of Parliament. This House at first was dominated by members of the Presbyterian faith, but the Independents (see p. xviii), getting control of the army, expelled by force the Presbyterian members, and thereby made possible a solution of the difficulties satisfactory to themselves. Having been condemned to death by a court especially created by the House of Commons to try him, the king was executed on the thirtieth of January, 1649. The monarchical and aristocratic elements were eliminated from the government and the popular representative body, the House of Commons, in its diminished form, assumed entire control of the nation.

3. THE PURITAN RÉGIME, 1649-1660.

Oliver Cromwell, the most forceful character in the Commons and the army, speedily made his way to complete control of affairs through his masterly handling of the army in suppressing all uprisings of the adherents of the late king. The few features which remained operative from the former constitution were done away with, and after a disturbed period of government by inefficient Parliaments, Cromwell arbitrarily assumed the direction of affairs, and a new written constitution, called the *Instrument of Government*, was adopted in 1653. Under this constitution the supreme executive power was vested in Cromwell under the title of Lord Protector. Four years later the value of his strong arm in holding the turbulent factors under control was so clearly recognized, that Parliament in the *Humble Petition and Advice*, recommending certain changes in the constitution, invited him to accept the title and dignity of King; but this he refused to do.

Oliver
CromwellInstrument
of Govern-
ment.Humble
Petition
and Advice.

The Puritan movement had rested upon two supports, popular indignation against the incorrigible absolutism of Charles I., and the development of the army as a weapon of defence against this tyranny, — a weapon swayed by religious fanaticism, and wielded and tempered by a leader who was a military genius and a master of men. The movement never comprised in its adherents the majority of the nation; the masses merely acquiesced in it. Therefore, it could not survive the storm of indignation that followed Charles's execution, the subsidence of the spirit of rebellion against monarchy now that its immediate provoking cause was removed, the reaction of hope that Charles's heir might not have inherited his political vices, and finally the death of Cromwell and the disintegration of his weapon, the army, through lack of use.

Decay of
Puritanism.

Oliver Cromwell died September 3, 1658. His son and successor, Richard Cromwell, was no statesman, and the turbulent and warring faction in the state gave him so much trouble, that he was soon glad to resign the reins of government. A war between different portions of the army was imminent,

The Res-
toration,
1660.

but Monk, general of the Scottish division, marched to London, called together a Parliament (giving it all the technical legality possible by summoning to it all the persons who had been legally elected to the last Parliament summoned by Charles I.), and procured the restoration of the feudal organization under the government of the legal heir to the throne (Charles II., son of the Charles who had been executed), and also the restoration of the Protestant religion as it had existed at the accession of Charles I.

Morals of
the court of
Charles II. The character of the luxurious and dissolute court of Charles II. Macaulay has sketched in a single paragraph (see ¶ 78). The literature of the period took its tone from the prevailing manners of the court. The first decade, it is true, gave to the world Milton's *Paradise Lost*. But the purity and elevation of his work is contrasted with a licentiousness and levity in the other writers of the period that even their brilliant talents, often approaching genius, cannot render tolerable. The greatest writer, and the only one whose works have continued to command the esteem of the public, was John Dryden, whose work comprised dramas, religious poems, translations, and satires on the political and social conditions of the times. *Absalom and Ahitophel*, the foremost of English satires, dealt with the Catholic agitation which then absorbed court and country.

In this poem the names are borrowed from that instance in the history of Israel when Ahitophel aided Absalom, favorite son of David, King of Israel, to rebel against his father. Dryden depicted the Duke of Monmouth, Protestant candidate for the throne, as the favorite Absalom, and the Duke of Shaftesbury, head of the anti-Catholic incendiaries, as Ahitophel, defeated conspirator and traitor, driven by exposure to flight and speedy death (see p. xxiv).

4. THE MIDDLE STUART MONARCHS, 1660-1688.

At the restoration of the Stuarts, in 1660, an act of indemnity for offences committed during the late struggle was passed, but the regicides were especially exempted from its operation. The resentment against them went so far that in January, 1661, even the dead bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw

Policy of
Charles II.

were taken from their tombs and hung at Tyburn. This extreme reaction against democracy and the Puritan religion brought about a frantic zeal for the maintenance of the state religion. Laws were passed aiming to restrict officers in municipal positions to adherents of the State Church; and the creed of that church was so rigidly enforced upon clergymen and teachers in the universities that two thousand of their number were forced to give up their positions. These formed the nucleus of what became later a powerful body of Non-conformists.

Its effect.

"Corporation Act,"
1661.

Another cause conspired with the dread of repeating the disastrous experiment of Puritanism, to create this stringent defence of the integrity of the state religion,—the fear of a relapse to Catholicism. The king was secretly pledged to restore that religion in England whenever it was practicable. His brother James, Duke of York, prospective heir to the throne, was professedly a Catholic. As the first step toward the conversion of England, the king tried to purchase toleration for Catholicism by offering toleration of dissenters, who otherwise were forbidden to meet as congregations for religious worship in groups of more than five. Parliament not only compelled the king to withdraw his offer, but also decreed that all government officers as well as municipal officers must be communicants in the State Church. This forced out of office the king's brother James, who was at the head of the navy, and many of the king's leading ministers resigned.

Anti-Catholic agitation.

"Test Act,"
1673.

Five years later a rascal named Titus Oates made public an alleged plot of the Catholics to murder the king, with the object of clearing a way for the immediate succession of James to the throne, and the subsequent reestablishment of the Catholic religion in England. The Earl of Shaftesbury, an unscrupulous politician, who had lately lost the favor both of the king and of the champions of Protestantism, determined to recover his lost influence in the national councils by fomenting the terrors created by this revelation. Other persons were induced, by love of notoriety or by the large rewards offered for information, to corroborate and enlarge upon the statements made by Oates, and Shaftesbury succeeded in convincing the nation that it had just escaped a Catholic

"Popish Plot," 1678.

revolution. Many peers, and even the queen herself, were implicated in these charges. Two thousand suspects were sent to prison; guards controlled the streets of London. In the height of this excitement Parliament framed a bill to exclude Catholics from both Houses of Parliament. In the existing temper of the people, it was deemed

wise that the Duke of York should withdraw from the kingdom; and the panic could be allayed only by the introduction of a bill called the "Exclusion Bill," to exclude the Duke of York from the succession to the throne. But the testimony produced by Shaftesbury, at last exaggerated beyond the credulity of even so excited a populace, reacted against him; and the court party was able temporarily to check the passage of the bill, and later to drive Shaftesbury into exile.

The failure of the exclusionists had been in part the result of their divided counsels; for most of their number had wished the succession to devolve upon the Princess Mary, the oldest child of James II., while Shaftesbury had determined that it should fall upon the Duke of Monmouth, an illegitimate son of Charles II., who posed as the champion of Protestantism, and claimed to be rightful heir to the throne by virtue of an alleged secret marriage between his mother and the king. To strengthen his cause, Shaftesbury had endeavored to marshal the country against the court, and had formed a committee to procure petitions to the king to assemble Parliament, for he believed that in the present temper of the nation that body would be subservient to his wishes.

The Parliament thus summoned had been dissolved in a few months, another Parliament being called to meet in Oxford, aloof from the noise of the turbulent capital. Thither the king repaired, accompanied by a body of his guards. Shaftesbury and his adherents also came to the meeting accompanied by troops. This partisan Parliament, ignoring all constitutional restraints in their attacks on the court party, and rejecting all intermediate courses proposed by the moderates, had insisted on the absolute exclusion of James from the succession, and had attempted to revive the burned-out fires of the Popish Plot agitation; but the king, shrewdly relying on the excesses of the Parliament to justify his course to the nation, had dissolved it with its work still undone.

This success of the court in its contest with Shaftesbury was in turn shaken by a new plot formed by the exclusionists. The plan provided for securing a Protestant sovereign by the assassination of both Charles and James, as they passed a farm-house in Hertfordshire, called the Rye House, belonging to one of the conspirators, on their way from Newmarket to London; but their journey was delayed, the plot was subsequently betrayed, and the conspirators paid the penalty of their crime upon the scaffold.

The failure of this plot and the odium which it brought upon the anti-court party (Whigs) removed for the time all opposition to the succession of the Duke of York. On the death of Charles II. in 1685 his claim to the throne of England was undisputed, except by Monmouth, who attempted to raise the west of England in the defence of his claims, but was defeated at Sedgemoor, captured, and executed.

The religious excitement continued unabated during the reign of James II. Matters reached a climax in 1688, three years after James's accession to the throne. He attempted by an edict to abrogate laws against Catholicism which had been passed to secure beyond all question the dominance of the Protestant religion. This edict, illegal in itself, was made more obnoxious to the clergy by an order directing them to read it in their several churches on a certain date. Thus they were compelled, as it seemed to them, to share in the overthrow of their own church. Seven of the Bishops of the State Church ventured to petition the king not to enforce his order, and he, in a passion at this questioning of the royal prerogative, threw them into prison. The courts did not sustain him in his tyranny, but public sentiment was so outraged by his act that a group of seven ministers and statesmen determined to put an end to the struggle with the Stuarts by inviting the husband of James's elder daughter (who was stadtholder of the Dutch Republic) to interfere for the protection of the liberties of England. This man, William, Prince of Orange, landed in the west of England with a military expedition on November 5, 1688, and marched upon London, meeting with only a formal and faint-hearted resistance

"Rye House Plot," 1683.

Accession of James II.

Execution of Monmouth.

Revolution of 1688.

"Declaration of Liberty of Conscience."

Trial of the Bishops.

from the people, who were alienated from James by repeated acts of tyranny. James fled to France, and William, since he could not legally summon a Parliament, issued writs for the election of a "Convention." This body declared that by virtue of recent events "the throne had thereby become vacant"; and by its authority, in February, 1689, the Prince of Orange was crowned as King William III., after having given his formal assent to a statement of the fun-

damental principles of the English Monarchy, presented to him by the convention under the guidance of the body of Ministers who had assumed the direction of affairs. These statesmen were determined not only to endure no longer the tyranny of James Stuart, but also to secure such recognition of the fundamental rights which the Stuarts had persistently denied them as should leave no ground for further dispute with any monarch. The principles enunciated in this statement were afterward incorporated into the series of laws which were enacted by Parliament under the name of the "Bill of Rights." The statement itself, called the "Declaration of Rights," is, next to "Magna Charta," the most important document in English history. The succession to the throne was now fixed by act of Parliament upon James's younger daughter, Anne, and her heirs; these failing, it was to pass to the descendants of his cousin Sophia, who had married the Prince of the German State of Hanover.

"Declara-
tion of
Rights."

Act of
Succession.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE NOTABLE EVENTS REFERRED TO IN THE ESSAY ON MILTON.

POLITICAL HISTORY.	LITERARY HISTORY.
1603. Accession of James I.	Milton b., December 9.
1605. Gunpowder Plot.	Shakespeare d.
1608.	Cowley b. Molière b.
1616.	Milton enters Cambridge University.
1618.	Milton writes <i>Ode on the Nativity</i> .
1625. Accession of Charles I.	Dryden b.
1629. Cromwell's first speech in Parl.	Milton writes <i>L'Allegro, Il Penseroso</i> .
1631.	Milton writes <i>Comus</i> .
1632+.	Milton writes <i>Lycidas</i> .
1634. First "Ship Money" Writ.	Ben Jonson d.
1637.	Milton travels on the Continent.
1637.	Milton, settled in London, defends, in
1638.	[pamphlets, the rights of the people.
1640. Long Parliament assembled.	
1642. Outbreak of Civil War.	
1643. Accession of Louis XIV. in France.	
1648. Independents seize control of Parliament.	
1649. Execution of Charles I.	Milton becomes Latin Secretary, and
1649. Establishment of the COMMON-WEALTH.	[continues his pamphlets.
1651.	Milton writes the <i>Defensio</i> .
1653. Establishment of the Protectorate.	
1657. <i>The Humble Petition and Advice</i> .	Milton begins <i>Paradise Lost</i> .
1657. Death of Cromwell. Discord.	
1660. Restoration of Charles II.	
1660. Corporation Act.	
1660. Act of Uniformity.	
1665.	Milton finishes <i>Paradise Lost</i> .
1667.	Cowley d. Swift b.
1670. Secret treaty, Charles II. and [Louis XIV.	Congreve b.
1671.	Milton writes <i>Paradise Regained</i> and
1672.	Addison b. [Samson Agonistes.
1673. Test Act.	
1674.	Milton d.
1678. Popish Plot.	
1679. Exclusion Bill.	
1681. Oxford Parliament.	
1683. Rye House Plot.	
1685. Accession of James II.	
1685. Monmouth's rebellion.	
1688. April, <i>Declaration for Liberty</i>	
1688. May, [of Conscience.	Pope b.
1688. June, Trial of the Bishops.	
1688. June, Invitation to William of Orange.	
1688. November, Landing of William.	
1688. December, Flight of James II.	
1689. February, Accession of William III. and Mary under the	
<i>Declaration of Rights</i> .	
1689. December, <i>Bill of Rights</i> .	

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DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF MILTON'S WORKS MENTIONED
IN THIS ESSAY.

L'Allegro (about 1632) is a poem in 152 lines of iambic tetrameter, describing the varied pleasures of a single day as they would present themselves to the mind of a man in an open, merry-hearted mood.

Il Penseroso (about 1632) is a companion poem in the same form, describing in rather more detail the pleasures that present themselves to the contemplative, serious-minded man, during the same period of time.

Comus (1634) is a masque, treating of the escape of a lady from the trap set for her by an enchanter, Comus; an escape made possible through her strength of character and her faith in God. It was composed for the Earl of Bridgewater, and was played at Ludlow Castle, Wales, at Michaelmas time, 1634.

Animadversions upon the Remonstrant's Defence against Smectymnuus (1641) was an attack upon the High-Church party, who were battling against Puritanism. Their champion, Bishop Hall, is the "Remonstrant" referred to, he having issued a pamphlet called *Humble Remonstrance to the High Court of Parliament*. To this five Puritan divines had replied in the pamphlet *Smectymnuus*, and Hall had issued a rejoinder. Milton's pamphlet, although powerful, was outdone by another from his pen a few months later,

The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty (1641), although both presented with extraordinary force the arguments of the Puritans against the extension of the Episcopal form of church government.

The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce Restored, to the good of both Sexes (1643).

The Judgment of Martin Bucee concerning Divorce (1644).

Tetrachordon (1644).

Colasterion (1644).

These four books treat of the principles of marriage and divorce as formulated by Milton from his own interpretation of the Scriptures. This was, in brief, that the conception of marriage as a *sacrament* was an invention of the priesthood, having no sanction in Scripture or reason; and that, therefore, divorce should be the remedy for any incompatibility of temper that might develop between husband and wife. The action of the authorities in regard to his first pamphlet on divorce led to the publication of his

Areopagitica, A Speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing, to the Parliament of England (1644), "the most popular

and eloquent, if not the greatest, of all Milton's prose writings." It attacked the "censorship" system, which required all books to be licensed by one of the official censors, and to be registered in the books of the Stationers' Company. Milton, by his neglect of these technicalities in the first pamphlet, had laid himself open to attack, but he sturdily refused to have the *Areopagitica* either licensed or registered.

Eikonoclastes was a pamphlet written to neutralize the effect on the popular mind of a work called *Eikon Basilike*, which had lately appeared and won extensive circulation. The title (meaning "Royal Image") indicates its nature. Although purporting to be a chronicle written by Charles I., detailing his sufferings at the hands of his rebellious people, it was really a spurious document, composed by enthusiastic Jacobites; and Milton's pamphlet was intended to destroy the favorable conception of the king which the *Eikon* was designed to create. The Jacobites renewed the combat by engaging the noted scholar Salmasius, of Leyden, to produce in Latin a *Defensio Regia pro Carolo I.*, and Milton was deputed to reply to this in his

Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio (1651), a book whose exposition of the cause of the Parliament proved a bulwark of defence against the Jacobite agitation. The Jacobites once more appealed to the public with their *Regii Sanguinis Clamor ad Cælum adversus Parricidas Anglicanos*, and again Milton responded with his

Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio Secunda (1654).

No other works of importance appeared before the publication of his *Paradise Lost* (1667), the character of which is sufficiently indicated in this *Essay*. The supplementary work,

Paradise Regained (1671), treats of the temptation of Christ during his forty days' fast in the wilderness. The theme proved difficult to treat because of the lack of action in the experiences described, the heroism displayed being exhibited in winning spiritual rather than physical victories, and most of the movement occurring in scenes introduced as visions, not as actual occurrences. The same year with this volume appeared

Samson Agonistes (1671), a dramatic ode founded on the captivity of the Hebrew Samson, and his triumph over his enemies in the hour of death. The only posthumous work of any importance is the *De Doctrina Christiana*, written late in his life, and sufficiently described in the opening paragraphs of this *Essay*.

ESSAY ON MILTON.

(*Edinburgh Review*, August, 1825.)

Joannis Miltoni, Angli, de Doctrinâ Christianâ libri duo posthumi.

A Treatise on Christian Doctrine, compiled from the Holy Scriptures alone. By JOHN MILTON, translated from the Original by Charles R. Sumner, M.A., &c. &c. 1825.

1. TOWARDS the close of the year 1823, Mr. Lemon, deputy-keeper of the state papers, in the course of his researches among the presses of his office, met with A Milton
a large Latin manuscript. With it were found corrected copies of the foreign despatches written by Milton, Ms.
while he filled the office of Secretary,¹ and several papers relating to the Popish Trials² and the Rye-house Plot.³
The whole was wrapped up in an envelope, superscribed *To Mr. Skinner, Merchant*. On examination, the large
manuscript proved to be the long lost Essay on the Doctrines of Christianity, which, according to Wood^o and Toland,^o Milton finished after the Restoration,⁴ and deposited with Cyriac Skinner.^o Skinner, it is well known, held the same political opinions with his illustrious friend.
It is therefore probable, as Mr. Lemon conjectures, that he may have fallen under the suspicions of the government during that persecution of the Whigs which fol-

¹ p. xxvii.

² p. xxiii.

³ p. xxv.

⁴ p. xxi.

lowed the dissolution of the Oxford parliament,¹ and that, in consequence of a general seizure of his papers, this work may have been brought to the office in which it has been found. But whatever the adventures of the manuscript may have been,² no doubt can exist that it is a genuine relic of the great poet.

2. Mr. Sumner,^o who was commanded by his Majesty to edit and translate the treatise, has acquitted himself of his task in a manner honourable to his talents and to his character. His version is not indeed 10
 Its translation into English. very easy or elegant ; but it is entitled to the praise of clearness and fidelity. His notes abound with interesting quotations, and have the rare merit of really elucidating the text. The preface is evidently the work of a sensible and candid man, firm in his own religious opinions, and tolerant towards those of others. 15

3. The book itself will not add much to the fame of Milton. It is, like all his Latin works, well written, though not exactly in the style of the prize essays
 Its style. of Oxford and Cambridge. There is no elaborate 20
 imitation of classical antiquity, no scrupulous purity, none of the ceremonial cleanness which characterises the diction of our academical Pharisees.² The author does not attempt to polish and brighten his composition into the Ciceronian^o gloss and brilliancy. He does not, in short, 25
 sacrifice sense and spirit to pedantic refinements. The nature of his subject compelled him to use many words

“That would have made Quintilian^o stare and gasp.”³

¹ p. xxiv.

² Note, p. 73.

³ See Milton's *Minor Poems* (Heath), Sonnet VI.

But he writes with as much ease and freedom as if Latin were his mother tongue ; and where he is least happy, his failure seems to arise from the carelessness of a native, not from the ignorance of a foreigner. We
5 may apply to him what Denham^o with great felicity says of Cowley.^o He wears the garb, but not the clothes of the ancients.¹

4. Throughout the volume are discernible the traces of a powerful and independent mind, emancipated from
10 the influence of authority, and devoted to the search of truth. Milton professes to form his system Its temper from the Bible alone ; and his digest of scriptural texts is certainly among the best that have appeared. But he is not always so happy in his inferences as in his citations.

15 5. Some of the heterodox doctrines which he avows seem to have excited considerable amazement, particularly his Arianism,^o and his theory on the subject Its here- of polygamy.¹ Yet we can scarcely conceive that sies. any person could have read the *Paradise Lost* without
20 suspecting him of the former ; nor do we think that any reader, acquainted with the history of his life, ought to be much startled at the latter. The opinions which he has expressed respecting the nature of the Deity, the eternity of matter, and the observation of the Sabbath,¹
25 might, we think, have caused more just surprise.

6. But we will not go into the discussion of these points. The book, were it far more orthodox or
far more heretical than it is, would not much edify Its obso- or corrupt the present generation. The men of lete char-
30 our time are not to be converted or perverted by quartos. acter.

¹ Note, p. 73.

A few more days, and this essay will follow the *Defensio Populi*¹ to the dust and silence of the upper shelf. The name of its author, and the remarkable circumstances attending its publication, will secure to it a certain degree of attention. For a month or two it will occupy a few 5 minutes of chat in every drawing-room, and a few columns in every magazine ; and it will then, to borrow the elegant language of the play-bills, be withdrawn, to make room for the forthcoming novelties.

7. We wish, however, to avail ourselves of the interest, 10 transient as it may be, which this work has excited. The dexterous Capuchins^o never choose to preach on the life and miracles of a saint, till they have awak-
 Its relation to this essay. ened the devotional feelings of their auditors by exhibiting some relic of him, a thread of his garment, a 15 lock of his hair, or a drop of his blood. On the same principle, we intend to take advantage of the late interesting discovery, and, while this memorial of a great and good man is still in the hands of all, to say something of his moral and intellectual qualities. Nor, we are convinced, 20 will the severest of our readers blame us if, on an occasion like the present, we turn for a short time from the topics of the day, to commemorate, in all love and reverence, the genius and virtues of John Milton, the poet, the statesman, the philosopher, the glory of English literature, the 25 champion and the martyr of English liberty.

8. It is by his poetry that Milton is best known ; and it is of his poetry that we wish first to speak. By the general suffrage of the civilised world, his place has

¹ Index, "Salmasius."

been assigned among the greatest masters of the art. His detractors, however, though outvoted, have not been silenced. There are many critics, and some of great name, who contrive in the same breath to extol the
 5 poems and to decry the poet. The works they acknowledge, considered in themselves, may be classed among the noblest productions of the human mind. But they will not allow the author to rank with those great men who, born in the infancy of civil-
 10 sation, supplied, by their own powers, the want of instruction, and, though destitute of models themselves, bequeathed to posterity models which defy imitation. Milton, it is said, inherited what his predecessors created ; he lived in an enlightened age ; he received a finished
 15 education ; and we must therefore, if we would form a just estimate of his powers, make large deductions in consideration of these advantages.

Milton's
fame rests
on his
poetry.

9. We venture to say, on the contrary, paradoxical as the remark may appear, that no poet has ever had to
 20 struggle with more unfavourable circumstances than Milton. He doubted, as he has himself owned, whether he had not been born "an age too late." For this notion Johnson^o has thought fit to make him the butt of much clumsy ridicule.¹ The poet, we believe,
 25 understood the nature of his art better than the critic. He knew that his poetical genius derived no advantage from the civilisation which surrounded him, or from the learning which he had acquired ; and he looked back with something like regret to the ruder age of simple
 30 words and vivid impressions.

His poetry
not a prod-
uct of the
age.

¹ Note, p. 74.

10. We think that, as civilisation advances, poetry almost necessarily declines. Therefore, though we fervently admire those great works of imagination which (Theses.) have appeared in dark ages, we do not admire them the more because they have appeared in 5
 1. Civiliza- dark ages. On the contrary, we hold that the most
 tion is an- dark ages. On the contrary, we hold that the most
 tagonistic dark ages. On the contrary, we hold that the most
 to poetry. wonderful and splendid proof of genius is a great
 poem produced in a civilised age. We cannot under-
 stand why those who believe in that most orthodox article
 of literary faith, that the earliest poets are generally the 10
 best, should wonder at the rule as if it were the excep-
 tion. Surely the uniformity of the phenomenon indicates
 a corresponding uniformity in the cause.

11. The fact is, that common observers reason from the progress of the experimental sciences to that of the 15
 imitative arts. The improvement of the former
 2. Science is gradual and slow. Ages are spent in collecting
 accompa- is gradual and slow. Ages are spent in collecting
 nies civili- materials, ages more in separating and combining
 zation. them. Even when a system has been formed,
 there is still something to add, to alter, or to reject. Every 20
 generation enjoys the use of a vast hoard bequeathed
 to it by antiquity, and transmits that hoard, augmented
 by fresh acquisitions, to future ages. In these pursuits,
 therefore, the first speculators lie under great disad-
 vantages, and, even when they fail, are entitled to praise. 25
 Their pupils, with far inferior intellectual powers, speedily
 surpass them in actual attainments. Every girl who has
 read Mrs. Marcet's° little dialogues on Political Economy
 could teach Montague¹ or Walpole° many lessons in
 finance. Any intelligent man may now, by resolutely 30

¹ Index, "Halifax."

applying himself for a few years to mathematics, learn more than the great Newton^o knew after half a century of study and meditation.

12. But it is not thus with music, with painting, or
 5 with sculpture. Still less is it thus with poetry. The progress of refinement rarely supplies these arts with better objects of imitation. It may indeed improve the instruments which are necessary to the mechanical operations of the musician, the
 10 sculptor, and the painter. But language, the machine of the poet, is best fitted for his purpose in its rudest state. Nations, like individuals, first perceive, and then abstract. They advance from particular images to general terms. Hence the vocabulary of an enlightened society is philo-
 15 sophical, that of a half-civilised people is poetical.

13. This change in the language of men is partly the cause and partly the effect of a corresponding change in the nature of their intellectual operations, of a
 change by which science gains and poetry loses. (Demonstration.)
 20 Generalisation is necessary to the advancement of knowledge, but particularity is indispensable to the Poëtry opposed to generalization.
 creations of the imagination. In proportion as men know more and think more, they look less at individuals and more at classes. They therefore make better
 25 theories and worse poems. They give us vague phrases instead of images, and personified qualities instead of men. They may be better able to analyse human nature than their predecessors. But analysis is not the business of the poet. His office is to portray, not to dissect. He
 30 may believe in a moral sense, like Shaftesbury^o; he may refer all human actions to self-interest, like Helvetius^o; or

he may never think about the matter at all. His creed on such subjects will no more influence his poetry, properly so called, than the notions which a painter may have conceived respecting the lachrymal glands, or the circulation of the blood, will affect the tears of his Niobe,^o 5 or the blushes of his Aurora.^o If Shakespeare had written a book on the motives of human actions, it is by no means certain that it would have been a good one. It is extremely improbable that it would have contained half so much able reasoning on the subject as is to be found 10 in the Fable of the Bees.^o But could Mandeville have created an Iago^o? Well as he knew how to resolve characters into their elements, would he have been able to combine those elements in such a manner as to make up a man, a real, living, individual man? 15

Poetry an-
tithetical
to reason.

14. Perhaps no person can be a poet, or can even enjoy poetry, without a certain unsoundness of mind, if anything which gives so much pleasure ought to be called unsoundness. By poetry we mean not all writing in verse, nor even all good writing 20 in verse. Our definition excludes many metrical compositions which, on other grounds, deserve the highest praise. By poetry we mean the art of employing words in such a manner as to produce an illusion on the imagination, the art of doing by means of words what the 25 painter does by means of colours. Thus the greatest of poets has described it, in lines universally admired for the vigour and felicity of their diction, and still more valuable on account of the just notion which they convey of the art in which he excelled : 30

“As imagination bodies forth
 The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
 Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
 A local habitation and a name.” *

5 15. These are the fruits of the “fine frenzy” which he
 ascribes to the poet, — a fine frenzy doubtless, but still a
 frenzy. Truth, indeed, is essential to poetry ; but Poetry
 it is the truth of madness. The reasonings are just ; demands
 but the premises are false. After the first supposi- credulity.
 10 tions have been made, everything ought to be consistent ;
 but those first suppositions require a degree of credulity
 which almost amounts to a partial and temporary de-
 rangement of the intellect. Hence of all people children
 are the most imaginative. They abandon themselves
 15 without reserve to every illusion. Every image which is
 strongly presented to their mental eye produces on them
 the effect of reality. No man, whatever his sensibility
 may be, is ever affected by Hamlet^o or Lear,^o as a little
 girl is affected by the story of poor Red Riding-hood.
 20 She knows that it is all false, that wolves cannot speak,
 that there are no wolves in England. Yet in spite of
 her knowledge she believes ; she weeps ; she trembles ;
 she dares not go into a dark room lest she should feel
 the teeth of the monster at her throat. Such is the
 25 despotism of the imagination over uncultivated minds.

16. In a rude state of society men are children
 with a greater variety of ideas. It is therefore in
 such a state of society that we may expect to find
 the poetical temperament in its highest perfection.
 30 In an enlightened age there will be much intelli-

(Conclu-
 sion.) Po-
 etry flour-
 ishes in a
 primitive
 society.

gence, much science, much philosophy, abundance of just classification and subtle analysis, abundance of wit and eloquence, abundance of verses, and even of good ones; but little poetry. Men will judge and compare; but they will not create. They will talk about the old poets, and comment on them, and to a certain degree enjoy them. But they will scarcely be able to conceive the effect which poetry produced on their ruder ancestors, the agony, the ecstasy, the plenitude of belief. The Greek Rhapsodists,^o according to Plato,^o could scarce¹⁰ recite Homer^o without falling into convulsions. The Mohawk^o hardly feels the scalping-knife while he shouts his death-song. The power which the ancient bards of Wales and Germany exercised over their auditors seems to modern readers almost miraculous. Such feelings are¹⁵ very rare in a civilised community, and most rare among those who participate most in its improvements. They linger longest among the peasantry.

(Thesis.)
Poetry re-
lies upon
illusion.

17. Poetry produces an illusion on the eye of the mind, as a magic-lantern produces an illusion on the eye of the²⁰ body. And, as the magic-lantern acts best in a dark room, poetry effects its purpose most completely in a dark age. As the light of knowledge breaks in upon its exhibitions, as the outlines of certainty become more and more definite and the shades²⁵ of probability more and more distinct, the hues and lineaments of the phantoms which it calls up grow fainter and fainter. We cannot unite the incompatible advantages of reality and deception, the clear discernment of truth and the exquisite enjoyment of fiction.³⁰

18. He who, in an enlightened and literary society,

aspires to be a great poet, must first become a little child. He must take to pieces the whole web of his mind. He must unlearn much of that knowledge which has perhaps constituted hitherto his chief title to superiority. (Application.) Civilization destroys illusion.

5 His very talents will be a hindrance to him. His difficulties will be proportioned to his proficiency in the pursuits which are fashionable among his contemporaries; and that proficiency will in general be proportioned to the vigour and activity of his mind. And it

10 is well if, after all his sacrifices and exertions, his works do not resemble a lisping man or a modern ruin. We have seen in our own time great talents, intense labour, and long meditation, employed in this struggle against the spirit of the age, and employed, we will not say absolutely

15 in vain, but with dubious success and feeble applause.

19. If these reasonings be just, no poet has ever triumphed over greater difficulties than Milton. He received a learned education: he was a profound and elegant classical scholar: he had studied all the Milton's culture.

20 mysteries of Rabbinical^o literature: he was intimately acquainted with every language of modern Europe, from which either pleasure or information was then to be derived. He was perhaps the only great poet of later times who has been distinguished by the excellence of

25 his Latin verse. The genius of Petrarch^o was scarcely of the first order; and his poems in the ancient language, though much praised by those who have never read them, are wretched compositions. Cowley,^o with all his admirable wit and ingenuity, had little imagination: nor

30 indeed do we think his classical diction comparable to that of Milton. The authority of Johnson^o is against us

on this point.¹ But Johnson had studied the bad writers of the middle ages till he had become utterly insensible to the Augustan^o elegance, and was as ill qualified to judge between two Latin styles as a habitual drunkard to set up for a wine-taster.

5

20. Versification in a dead language is an exotic, a far-fetched, costly, sickly, imitation of that which else-

His triumph
over conditions,
in the Latin
poems.

where may be found in healthful and spontaneous perfection. The soils on which this rarity flourishes are in general as ill suited to the production 10 of vigorous native poetry as the flower-pots of a hot-house to the growth of oaks. That the author of the *Paradise Lost* should have written the Epistle to Manso^o was truly wonderful. Never before were such marked originality and such exquisite mimicry 15 found together. Indeed in all the Latin poems of Milton the artificial manner indispensable to such works is admirably preserved, while, at the same time, his genius gives to them a peculiar charm, an air of nobleness and freedom, which distinguishes them from all other writ- 20 ings of the same class. They remind us of the amusements of those angelic warriors who composed the cohort of Gabriel :

“About him exercised heroic games
The unarmed youth of heaven. But o’er their heads
Celestial armoury, shield, helm, and spear,
Hung high, with diamond flaming and with gold.” *

25

We cannot look upon the sportive exercises for which the genius of Milton ungirds itself, without catching a

¹ Note, p. 74.

* *Paradise Lost*, IV. 551-554.

glimpse of the gorgeous and terrible panoply which it is accustomed to wear. The strength of his imagination triumphed over every obstacle. So intense and ardent was the fire of his mind, that it not only was not suffocated beneath the weight of its fuel, but penetrated the whole superincumbent mass with its own heat and radiance.

21. It is not our intention to attempt anything like a complete examination of the poetry of Milton. The public has long been agreed as to the merit of the most remarkable passages, the incomparable harmony of the numbers, and the excellence of that style which no rival has been able to equal, and no parodist to degrade, which displays in their highest perfection the idiomatic powers of the English tongue, and to which every ancient and every modern language has contributed something of grace, of energy, or of music. In the vast field of criticism on which we are entering, innumerable reapers have already put their sickles. Yet the harvest is so abundant that the negligent search of a straggling gleaner may be rewarded with a sheaf.

22. The most striking characteristic of the poetry of Milton is the extreme remoteness of the associations by means of which it acts on the reader. Its effect is produced, not so much by what it expresses, as by what it suggests; not so much by the ideas which it directly conveys, as by other ideas which are connected with them. He electrifies the mind through conductors. The most unimaginative man must understand the *Iliad*.^o Homer gives him no choice, and requires

Importance of his work.

His literary method.

from him no exertion, but takes the whole upon himself, and sets the images in so clear a light, that it is impossible to be blind to them. The works of Milton cannot be comprehended or enjoyed, unless the mind of the reader co-operate with that of the writer. He does not 5 paint a finished picture, or play for a mere passive listener. He sketches, and leaves others to fill up the outline. He strikes the key-note, and expects his hearer to make out the melody.

23. We often hear of the magical influence of poetry. 10

The expression in general means nothing; but, applied to the writings of Milton, it is most appropriate.

Its effectiveness.

His poetry acts like an incantation. Its merit lies less in its obvious meaning than in its occult power. There would seem, at first sight, to be no more in his 15 words than in other words. But they are words of enchantment. No sooner are they pronounced, than the past is present and the distant near. New forms of beauty start at once into existence, and all the burial-places of the memory give up their dead. Change the 20 structure of the sentence; substitute one synonyme for another, and the whole effect is destroyed. The spell loses its power; and he who should then hope to conjure with it would find himself as much mistaken as Cassim^o in the Arabian tale, when he stood crying, "Open Wheat," 25 "Open Barley," to the door which obeyed no sound but "Open Sesame." The miserable failure of Dryden¹ in his attempt to translate into his own diction some parts of the *Paradise Lost*, is a remarkable instance of this.

30

¹ Index, "Dryden," end.

24. In support of these observations we may remark, that scarcely any passages in the poems of Milton are more generally known or more frequently repeated than those which are little more than muster-rolls of names.¹ They are not always more appropriate or more melodious than other names. But they are charmed names. Every one of them is the first link in a long chain of associated ideas. Like the dwelling-place of our infancy revisited in manhood, like the song of our country heard in a strange land, they produce upon us an effect wholly independent of their intrinsic value. One transports us back to a remote period of history. Another places us among the novel scenes and manners of a distant region. A third evokes all the dear classical recollections of childhood, the schoolroom, the dog-eared Virgil,^o the holiday, and the prize. A fourth brings before us the splendid phantoms of chivalrous romance, the trophied lists, the embroidered housings, the quaint devices, the haunted forests, the enchanted gardens, the achievements of enamoured knights, and the smiles of rescued princesses.

✓ 25. In none of the works of Milton is his peculiar manner more happily displayed than in the *Allegro* and the *Penseroso*. It is impossible to conceive that the mechanism of language can be brought to a more exquisite degree of perfection. These poems differ from others as attar of roses differs from ordinary rose water, the close-packed essence from the thin diluted mixture. They are indeed not so much poems, as collections of hints, from each of which the reader is to

Corrobor-
tion of
above.

L'Allegro
and *Il*
Penseroso.

¹ See *Paradise Lost*, I. 576-587; II. 659-667.

make out a poem for himself. Every epithet is a text for a stanza.

26. The *Comus* and the *Samson Agonistes* are works which, though of very different merit, offer some marked

Comus and points of resemblance. Both are lyric poems in 5
Samson the form of plays. There are perhaps no two kinds
Agonistes, of composition so essentially dissimilar as the drama
as lyric of and the ode. The business of the dramatist is to
dramas. keep himself out of sight, and to let nothing appear but
his characters. As soon as he attracts notice to his per- 10
sonal feelings, the illusion is broken. The effect is as
unpleasant as that which is produced on the stage by the
voice of a prompter or the entrance of a scene-shifter.
Hence it was, that the tragedies of Byron^o were his least
successful performances. They resemble those pasteboard 15
pictures invented by the friend of children, Mr. New-
berry,^o in which a single moveable head goes round
twenty different bodies, so that the same face looks
out upon us successively, from the uniform of a hussar,
the furs of a judge, and the rags of a beggar. In all the 20
characters, patriots and tyrants, haters and lovers, the
frown and sneer of Harold¹ were discernible in an in-
stant. But this species of egotism, though fatal to the
drama, is the inspiration of the ode. It is the part of the
lyric poet to abandon himself, without reserve, to his 20
own emotions.

27. Between these hostile elements many great men have endeavoured to effect an amalgamation, but never with complete success. The Greek Drama, on the model of which the *Samson* was written,² sprang from the Ode. 30

¹ Index, "Byron."

² Note, p. 74.

The dialogue was ingrafted on the chorus, and naturally partook of its character. The genius of the greatest of the Athenian dramatists co-operated with the circumstances under which tragedy made its first appearance. *Æschylus*^o was, head and heart, a lyric poet. In his time, the Greeks had far more intercourse with the East than in the days of Homer ; and they had not yet acquired that immense superiority in war, in science, and in the arts, which, in the following generation, led them to treat the Asiatics with contempt. From the narrative of Herodotus^o it should seem that they still looked up, with the veneration of disciples, to Egypt and Assyria. At this period, accordingly, it was natural that the literature of Greece should be tinctured with the Oriental style. And that style, we think, is discernible in the works of Pindar^o and *Æschylus*. The latter often reminds us of the Hebrew writers. The book of Job, indeed, in conduct and diction, bears a considerable resemblance to some of his dramas. Considered as plays, his works are absurd ; considered as choruses, they are above all praise. If, for instance, we examine the address of Clytemnestra to Agamemnon^o on his return, or the description of the seven Argive chiefs,¹ by the principles of dramatic writing, we shall instantly condemn them as monstrous. But if we forget the characters, and think only of the poetry, we shall admit that it has never been surpassed in energy and magnificence. Sophocles^o made the Greek drama as dramatic as was consistent with its original form. His portraits of men have a sort of similarity ; but it is the similarity not

The Greek prototypes of the *Samson*.

¹ Index, "*Æschylus*."

of a painting, but of a bas-relief. It suggests a resemblance ; but it does not produce an illusion. Euripides^o attempted to carry the reform further. But it was a task far beyond his powers, perhaps beyond any powers. Instead of correcting what was bad, he destroyed what was 5 excellent. He substituted crutches for stilts, bad sermons for good odes.

28. Milton, it is well known, admired Euripides highly, much more highly than, in our opinion, Euripides de-
 Its limita- served. Indeed the caresses which this partiality 10
 tions. leads our countryman to bestow on "sad Electra's¹ poet,"² sometimes remind us of the beautiful Queen of Fairy-land kissing the long ears of Bottom.^o At all events, there can be no doubt that this veneration for the Athenian, whether just or not, was injurious to the Samson 15 Agonistes. Had Milton taken Æschylus for his model, he would have given himself up to the lyric inspiration, and poured out profusely all the treasures of his mind, without bestowing a thought on those dramatic proprieties which the nature of the work rendered it impos- 20 sible to preserve. In the attempt to reconcile things in their own nature inconsistent, he has failed, as every one else must have failed. We cannot identify ourselves with the characters, as in a good play. We cannot identify ourselves with the poet, as in a good ode. The conflict- 25 ing ingredients, like an acid and an alkali mixed, neutralize each other. We are by no means insensible to the merits of this celebrated piece, to the severe dignity of the style, the graceful and pathetic solemnity of the open-

¹ Index, "Euripides."

² See Milton's *Minor Poems* (Heath), Sonnet III.

ing speech, or the wild and barbaric melody which gives so striking an effect to the choral passages. But we think it, we confess, the least successful effort of the genius of Milton.

5 29. The *Comus* is framed on the model of the Italian Masque,^o as the *Samson* is framed on the model of the Greek Tragedy. It is certainly the noblest per-
 formance of the kind which exists in any language. *Comus* and the Italian Masque.
 It is as far superior to the *Faithful Shepherdess*,^o as
 10 the *Faithful Shepherdess* is to the *Aminta*,^o or the *Aminta* to the *Pastor Fido*.^o It was well for Milton that he had here no Euripides to mislead him. He understood and loved the literature of modern Italy. But he did not feel for it the same veneration which he entertained for the
 15 remains of Athenian and Roman poetry, consecrated by so many lofty and endearing recollections. The faults, moreover, of his Italian predecessors were of a kind to which his mind had a deadly antipathy. He could stoop to a plain style, sometimes even to a bald style ; but false
 20 brilliancy was his utter aversion. His muse had no objection to a russet attire ; but she turned with disgust from the finery of Guarini,^o as tawdry and as paltry as the rags of a chimney-sweeper on May-day. Whatever ornaments she wears are of massive gold, not only dazzling to
 25 the sight, but capable of standing the severest test of the crucible.

30 30. Milton attended in the *Comus* to the distinction which he neglected in the *Samson*. He made his Masque what it ought to be, essentially lyrical, and
 30 dramatic only in semblance. He has not attempted
 a fruitless struggle against a defect inherent in the nature

Lyric elements of *Comus*.

of that species of composition; and he has therefore succeeded, wherever success was not impossible. The speeches must be read as majestic soliloquies; and he who so reads them will be enraptured with their eloquence, their sublimity, and their music. The interruptions of the dialogue, however, impose a constraint upon the writer, and break the illusion of the reader. The finest passages are those which are lyric in form as well as in spirit. "I should much commend," says the excellent Sir Henry Wotton^o in a letter to Milton, "the 10 tragical part if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Dorique delicacy in your songs and odes, whereunto, I must plainly confess to you, I have seen yet nothing parallel in our language." The criticism was just. It is when Milton escapes from the shackles of the dialogue, 15 when he is discharged from the labour of uniting two incongruous styles, when he is at liberty to indulge his choral raptures without reserve, that he rises even above himself. Then, like his own good Genius^o bursting from the earthly form and weeds of Thyrsis,^o he stands forth 20 in celestial freedom and beauty¹; he seems to cry exultingly,

"Now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly or I can run,"²

to skim the earth, to soar above the clouds, to bathe 25 in the Elysian dew of the rainbow, and to inhale the balmy smells of nard and cassia, which the musky wings of the zephyr scatter through the cedared alleys of the Hesperides.^o

¹ Note, p. 74.

² *Comus*, 1012, 1013.

✓ 31. There are several of the minor poems of Milton on which we would willingly make a few remarks. Still more willingly would we enter into a detailed examination of that admirable poem, the *Paradise Regained*.
 5 *Regained*, which, strangely enough, is scarcely ever mentioned except as an instance of the blindness of the parental affection which men of letters bear towards the offspring of their intellects. That Milton was mistaken in preferring this work, excellent as it is, to the *Paradise*
 10 *Lost*, we readily admit. But we are sure that the superiority of the *Paradise Lost* to the *Paradise Regained* is not more decided, than the superiority of the *Paradise Regained* to every poem which has since made its appearance. But our limits prevent us from discussing
 15 the point at length. We hasten on to that extraordinary production which the general suffrage of critics has placed in the highest class of human compositions.

32. The only poem of modern times which can be compared with the *Paradise Lost* is the *Divine Comedy*.^o
 20 The subject of Milton, in some points, resembled *Paradise Lost* that of Dante^o; but he has treated it in a widely different manner. We cannot, we think, better illustrate our opinion respecting our own great poet, than by contrasting him with the father of Tuscan literature.
 25 33. The poetry of Milton differs from that of Dante, as the hieroglyphics of Egypt differed from the picture-writing of Mexico. The images which Dante employs speak for themselves; they stand simply for what they are. Those of Milton have a
 30 signification which is often discernible only to the initiated. Their value depends less on what they

Dante and Milton; contrasts in their work.
 1. Similes.

directly represent than on what they remotely suggest. However strange, however grotesque, may be the appearance which Dante undertakes to describe, he never shrinks from describing it. He gives us the shape, the colour, the sound, the smell, the taste; he counts the numbers; he measures the size. His similes are the illustrations of a traveller. Unlike those of other poets, and especially of Milton, they are introduced in a plain, business-like manner; not for the sake of any beauty in the objects from which they are drawn; not for the sake of any ornament which they may impart to the poem; but simply in order to make the meaning of the writer as clear to the reader as it is to himself. The ruins of the precipice which led from the sixth to the seventh circle of hell¹ were like those of the rock which fell into the Adige on the south of Trent. The cataract of Phlegethon was like that of Aqua Cheta at the monastery of St. Benedict. The place where the heretics were confined in burning tombs resembled the vast cemetery of Arles.

20

34. Now let us compare with the exact details of Dante the dim intimations of Milton. We will cite a few examples. The English poet has never thought of

2. Details.

taking the measure of Satan. He gives us merely a vague idea of vast bulk. In one passage the fiend lies stretched out huge in length, floating many a rood, equal in size to the earth-born enemies of Jove, or to the sea-monster which the mariner mistakes for an island.² When he addresses himself to battle against the guardian angels, he stands like Teneriffe or Atlas: his stature

30

¹ Note, pp. 75, 76.

² Note, p. 77.

reaches the sky.¹ Contrast with these descriptions the lines in which Dante has described the gigantic spectre of Nimrod. "His face seemed to me as long and as broad as the ball of St. Peter's at Rome; and his other
 5 limbs were in proportion; so that the bank, which concealed him from the waist downwards, nevertheless showed so much of him, that three tall Germans would in vain have attempted to reach to his hair."² We are sensible that we do no justice to the admirable style of the Floren-
 10 tine poet. But Mr. Cary's^o translation is not at hand; and our version, however rude, is sufficient to illustrate our meaning.

35. Once more, compare the lazar-house in the eleventh book of the Paradise Lost with the last ward of Male-
 15 bolge in Dante.² Milton avoids the loathsome de- Illustration
 tails, and takes refuge in indistinct but solemn and of (2).
 tremendous imagery, Despair hurrying from couch to couch to mock the wretches with his attendance; Death shaking his dart over them, but, in spite of sup-
 20 plications, delaying to strike. What says Dante? "There was such a moan there as there would be if all the sick who, between July and September, are in the hospitals of Valdichiana, and of the Tuscan swamps, and of Sardinia, were in one pit together; and such a stench was
 25 issuing forth as is wont to issue from decayed limbs."

36. We will not take upon ourselves the invidious office of settling precedence between two such writers. Each in his own department is incomparable; and
 each, we may remark, has wisely, or fortunately, 3. Personal
 30 taken a subject adapted to exhibit his peculiar talent narration.

¹ Note, p. 77.

² Note, p. 78.

to the greatest advantage. The Divine Comedy is a personal narrative. Dante is the eye-witness and ear-witness of that which he relates. He is the very man who has heard the tormented spirits crying out for the second death,¹ who has read the dusky characters on the portal ; within which there is no hope,¹ who has hidden his face from the terrors of the Gorgon,¹ who has fled from the hooks and the seething pitch of Barbariccia and Draghi-gnazzo.¹ His own hands have grasped the shaggy sides of Lucifer.¹ His own feet have climbed the mountain of 10 expiation.¹ His own brow has been marked by the purifying angel.¹ The reader would throw aside such a tale in incredulous disgust, unless it were told with the strongest air of veracity, with a sobriety even in its horrors, with the greatest precision and multiplicity in 15 its details. The narrative of Milton in this respect differs from that of Dante, as the adventures of Amadis^o differ from those of Gulliver.² The author of Amadis would have made his book ridiculous if he had introduced those minute particulars which give such a charm to the work 20 of Swift,^o the nautical observations, the affected delicacy about names, the official documents transcribed at full length, and all the unmeaning gossip and scandal of the court, springing out of nothing, and tending to nothing. We are not shocked at being told that a man who lived, 25 nobody knows when, saw many very strange sights, and we can easily abandon ourselves to the illusion of the romance. But when Lemuel Gulliver, surgeon, now actually resident at Rotherhithe,^o tells us of pygmies and giants, flying islands, and philosophising horses, nothing but such 30

¹ Note, pp. 78, 79.² Index, "Swift."

circumstantial touches could produce for a single moment a deception on the imagination.

37. Of all the poets who have introduced into their works the agency of supernatural beings, Milton has succeeded best. Here Dante decidedly yields to him : 4. The Super-natural.
and as this is a point on which many rash and ill-considered judgments have been pronounced, we feel inclined to dwell on it a little longer. The most fatal error which a poet can possibly commit in the
10 management of his machinery, is that of attempting to philosophise too much. Milton has been often censured for ascribing to spirits many functions of which spirits must be incapable. But these objections, though sanctioned by eminent names, originate, we venture to say,
15 in profound ignorance of the art of poetry.

38. What is spirit? What are our own minds, the portion of spirit with which we are best acquainted? We observe certain phenomena. We cannot explain them into material causes. We therefore infer that
20 there exists something which is not material. But of this something we have no idea. We can define it only by negatives. We can reason about it only by symbols. We use the word ; but we have no image of the thing ; and the business of poetry is with images, and
25 not with words. The poet uses words indeed ; but they are merely the instruments of his art, not its objects. They are the materials which he is to dispose in such a manner as to present a picture to the mental eye. And if they are not so disposed, they are no more entitled to
30 be called poetry than a bale of canvas and a box of colours to be called a painting.

39. Logicians may reason about abstractions. But the great mass of men must have images. The strong tendency of the multitude in all ages and nations to idolatry can be explained on no other principle. The first inhabitants of Greece, there is reason to believe, worshipped one invisible Deity. But the necessity of having something more definite to adore produced, in a few centuries, the innumerable crowd of Gods and Goddesses. In like manner the ancient Persians thought it impious to exhibit the Creator under a human form. Yet even these transferred to the Sun the worship which, in speculation, they considered due only to the Supreme Mind. The History of the Jews is the record of a continued struggle between pure Theism, supported by the most terrible sanctions, and the strangely fascinating desire of having some visible and tangible object of adoration. Perhaps none of the secondary causes which Gibbon^o has assigned for the rapidity with which Christianity spread over the world, while Judaism scarcely ever acquired a proselyte, operated more powerfully than this feeling. God, the uncreated, the incomprehensible, the invisible, attracted few worshippers. A philosopher might admire so noble a conception: but the crowd turned away in disgust from words which presented no image to their minds. It was before Deity embodied in a human form, walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping over their graves, slumbering in the manger, bleeding on the cross, that the prejudices of the Synagogue, and the doubts of the Academy, and the pride of the Portico, and the fasces of the Lictor, and the swords of thirty legions, were hum-

bled in the dust.¹ Soon after Christianity had achieved its triumph, the principle which had assisted it began to corrupt it. It became a new Paganism. Patron saints assumed the offices of household gods. St. George took
 5 the place of Mars. St. Elmo consoled the mariner for the loss of Castor and Pollux. The Virgin Mother and Cecilia succeeded to Venus and the Muses. The fascination of sex and loveliness was again joined to that of celestial dignity ; and the homage of chivalry was blended
 10 with that of religion. Reformers have often made a stand against these feelings ; but never with more than apparent and partial success. The men who demolished the images in Cathedrals have not always been able to demolish those which were enshrined in their minds. It would
 15 not be difficult to show that in politics the same rule holds good. Doctrines, we are afraid, must generally be embodied before they can excite a strong public feeling. The multitude is more easily interested for the most unmeaning badge, or the most insignificant name, than for
 20 the most important principle.

40. From these considerations, we infer that no poet, who should affect that metaphysical accuracy for the want of which Milton has been blamed, would
 escape a disgraceful failure. Still, however, there
 25 was another extreme which, though far less dangerous, was also to be avoided. The imaginations of men are in a great measure under the control of their opinions. The most exquisite art of poetical colouring can produce no illusion, when it is employed to represent that which
 30 is at once perceived to be incongruous and absurd.

¹ Note, p. 79.

Milton wrote in an age of philosophers and theologians. It was necessary, therefore, for him to abstain from giving such a shock to their understandings as might break the charm which it was his object to throw over their imaginations. This is the real explanation of the indistinctness 5 and inconsistency with which he has often been reproached. Dr. Johnson^o acknowledges that it was absolutely necessary that the spirits should be clothed with material forms. "But," says he, "the poet should have secured the consistency of his system by keeping immateriality out of 10 sight, and seducing the reader to drop it from his thoughts." This is easily said; but what if Milton could not seduce his readers to drop immateriality from their thoughts? What if the contrary opinion had taken so full a possession of the minds of men as to leave no room 15 even for the half belief which poetry requires? Such we suspect to have been the case. It was impossible for the poet to adopt altogether the material or the immaterial system. He therefore took his stand on the debatable ground. He left the whole in ambiguity. He has 20 doubtless, by so doing, laid himself open to the charge of inconsistency. But, though philosophically in the wrong, we cannot but believe that he was poetically in the right. This task, which almost any other writer would have found impracticable, was easy to him. The 25 peculiar art which he possessed of communicating his meaning circuitously through a long succession of associated ideas, and of intimating more than he expressed, enabled him to disguise those incongruities which he could not avoid.

world ought to be at once mysterious and picturesque. That of Milton is so. That of Dante is picturesque indeed beyond any that ever was written. Its *e.g. Dante's* effect approaches to that produced by the pencil or *devils*.
 5 the chisel. But it is picturesque to the exclusion of all mystery. This is a fault on the right side, a fault inseparable from the plan of Dante's poem, which, as we have already observed, rendered the utmost accuracy of description necessary. Still it is a fault. The super-
 10 natural agents excite an interest ; but it is not the interest which is proper to supernatural agents. We feel that we could talk to the ghosts and dæmons without any emotion of unearthly awe. We could, like Don Juan,^o ask them to supper, and eat heartily in their company. Dante's
 15 angels are good men with wings. His devils are spiteful ugly executioners. His dead men are merely living men in strange situations. The scene which passes between the poet and Farinata is justly celebrated.¹ Still, Farinata in the burning tomb is exactly what Farinata would have
 20 been at an *auto da fe*.^o Nothing can be more touching than the first interview of Dante and Beatrice. Yet what is it, but a lovely woman chiding, with sweet austere composure, the lover for whose affection she is grateful, but whose vices she reprobates? The feelings which give
 25 the passage its charm would suit the streets of Florence as well as the summit of the Mount of Purgatory.¹

42. The spirits of Milton are unlike those of almost all other writers. His fiends, in particular, are wonderful creations. They are not metaphysical abstractions. Milton's
 30 They are not wicked men. They are not ugly *devils*.

¹ Note, p. 80.

beasts. They have no horns, no tails, none of the fee-faw-fum of Tasso^o and Klopstock.^o They have just enough in common with human nature to be intelligible to human beings. Their characters are, like their forms, marked by a certain dim resemblance to those of men,⁵ but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions, and veiled in mysterious gloom.

43. Perhaps the gods and demons of Æschylus^o may best bear a comparison with the angels and devils of Æschy- Milton. The style of the Athenian had, as we¹⁰ lus's *devils*. have remarked, something of the Oriental character; and the same peculiarity may be traced in his mythology. It has nothing of the amenity and elegance which we generally find in the superstitions of Greece. All is rugged, barbaric, and colossal. The legends of¹⁵ Æschylus seem to harmonise less with the fragrant groves and graceful porticoes in which his countrymen paid their vows to the God of Light and Goddess of Desire, than with those huge and grotesque labyrinths of eternal granite in which Egypt enshrined her mystic²⁰ Osiris,^o or in which Hindostan still bows down to her seven-headed idols. His favourite gods are those of the elder generation, the sons of heaven and earth, compared with whom Jupiter himself was a stripling and an upstart, the gigantic Titans, and the inexorable Furies.²⁵ Foremost among his creations of this class stands Prometheus,^o half fiend, half redeemer, the friend of man, the sullen and implacable enemy of heaven. Prometheus bears undoubtedly a considerable resemblance to the Satan of Milton. In both we find the same impatience³⁰ of control, the same ferocity, the same unconquerable

pride. In both characters also are mingled, though in very different proportions, some kind and generous feelings. Prometheus, however, is hardly superhuman enough. He talks too much of his chains and his uneasy posture :
 5 he is rather too much depressed and agitated. His resolution seems to depend on the knowledge which he possesses that he holds the fate of his torturer in his hands, and that the hour of his release will surely come. But Satan is a creature of another sphere. The might
 10 of his intellectual nature is victorious over the extremity of pain. Amidst agonies which cannot be conceived without horror, he deliberates, resolves, and even exults. Against the sword of Michael, against the thunder of Jehovah, against the flaming lake, and the marl burning
 15 with solid fire, against the prospect of an eternity of unintermitted misery, his spirit bears up unbroken, resting on its own innate energies, requiring no support from anything external, nor even from hope itself.¹

44. To return for a moment to the parallel which we
 20 have been attempting to draw between Milton and Dante, we would add that the poetry of these great men has in a considerable degree taken its character from Contrast in their characters. their moral qualities. They are not egotists. They rarely obtrude their idiosyncrasies on their readers. They
 25 have nothing in common with those modern beggars for fame, who extort a pittance from the compassion of the inexperienced by exposing the nakedness and sores of their minds. Yet it would be difficult to name two writers whose works have been more completely, though
 30 undesignedly, coloured by their personal feelings.

¹ Note, p. 80.

45. The character of Milton was peculiarly distinguished by loftiness of spirit ; that of Dante by intensity of feeling. In every line of the Divine Comedy
 Character of Dante. we discern the asperity which is produced by pride struggling with misery. There is perhaps no work in the 5 world so deeply and uniformly sorrowful. The melancholy of Dante was no fantastic caprice. It was not, as far as at this distance of time can be judged, the effect of external circumstances. It was from within. Neither love nor glory, neither the conflicts of earth nor the hope of 10 heaven could dispel it. It turned every consolation and every pleasure into its own nature. It resembled that noxious Sardinian soil of which the intense bitterness is said to have been perceptible even in its honey. His mind was, in the noble language of the Hebrew poet, 15 "a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and where the light was as darkness !"¹ The gloom of his character discolours all the passions of men, and all the face of nature, and tinges with its own livid hue the flowers of Paradise and the glories of the eternal throne. All the portraits 20 of him are singularly characteristic. No person can look on the features, noble even to ruggedness, the dark furrows of the cheek, the haggard and woful stare of the eye, the sullen and contemptuous curve of the lip, and doubt that they belong to a man too proud and too sen- 25 sitive to be happy.

46. Milton was, like Dante, a statesman and a lover ; and, like Dante, he had been unfortunate in ambition and in love. He had survived his health and his
 Character of Milton. sight, the comforts of his home, and the prosperity 30

¹ Job x. 22.

of his party. Of the great men by whom he had been distinguished at his entrance into life, some had been taken away from the evil to come ; some had carried into foreign climates their unconquerable hatred of oppression ; some were pining in dungeons ; and some had poured forth their blood on scaffolds.¹ Venal and licentious scribblers, with just sufficient talent to clothe the thoughts of a pandar in the style of a bellman, were now the favourite writers of the Sovereign and of the public.¹ It was a loathsome herd, which could be compared to nothing so fitly as to the rabble of Comus, grotesque monsters, half bestial, half human, dropping with wine, bloated with gluttony, and reeling in obscene dances. Amidst these that fair Muse was placed, like the chaste lady of the Masque, lofty, spotless, and serene, to be chattered at, and pointed at, and grinned at, by the whole rout of Satyrs and Goblins.¹ If ever despondency and asperity could be excused in any man, they might have been excused in Milton. But the strength of his mind overcame every calamity. Neither blindness, nor gout, nor age, nor penury, nor domestic afflictions, nor political disappointments, nor abuse, nor proscription, nor neglect, had power to disturb his sedate and majestic patience. His spirits do not seem to have been high, but they were singularly equable. His temper was serious, perhaps stern ; but it was a temper which no sufferings could render sullen or fretful. Such as it was when, on the eve of great events, he returned from his travels, in the prime of health and manly beauty, loaded with literary distinctions, and glowing with patri-

¹ Note, p. 81.

otic hopes,¹ such it continued to be, when, after having experienced every calamity which is incident to our nature, old, poor, sightless, and disgraced, he retired to his hovel to die.

47. Hence it was that, though he wrote the *Paradise Lost* at a time of life when images of beauty and tender-

His character expressed in *Paradise Lost*. ness are in general beginning to fade, even from those minds in which they have not been effaced by anxiety and disappointment, he adorned it with all that is most lovely and delightful in the 10 physical and in the moral world. Neither Theocritus^o nor Ariosto^o had a finer or a more healthful sense of the pleasantness of external objects, or loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, the juice of summer fruits, and the coolness of 15 shady fountains. His conception of love unites all the voluptuousness of the Oriental haram, and all the gallantry of the chivalric tournament, with all the pure and quiet affection of an English fireside. His poetry reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells, 20 beautiful as fairy-land, are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche.

48. Traces, indeed, of the peculiar character of Milton may be found in all his works; but it is most strongly 25

The *Sonnets*. displayed in the Sonnets. Those remarkable poems have been undervalued by critics who have not understood their nature. They have no epigrammatic point. There is none of the ingenuity of Filicaja^o in the thought, none of the hard and brilliant enamel of Pe- 30

¹ See outline of Milton's life, p. xxvii.



MASK OF DANTE

One of the three given to Baron Kirkup by the sculptor Bartolini

trarch^o in the style. They are simple but majestic records of the feelings of the poet; as little tricked out for the public eye as his diary would have been. A victory,¹ an expected attack upon the city,² a momentary fit
 5 of depression or exultation,³ a jest thrown out against one of his books,⁴ a dream which, for a short time restored to him that beautiful face over which the grave had closed for ever,⁵ led him to musings which, without effort, shaped themselves into verse.* The unity of sentiment and
 10 severity of style which characterise these little pieces remind us of the Greek Anthology,^o or perhaps still more of the Collects^o of the English Liturgy. The noble poem on the Massacres of Piedmont⁶ is strictly a collect in verse.

15 49. The Sonnets are more or less striking, according as the occasions which gave birth to them are more or less interesting. But they are, almost without ex-
 ception, dignified by a sobriety and greatness of Their typical
 mind to which we know not where to look for a character.
 20 parallel. It would, indeed, be scarcely safe to draw any decided inferences as to the character of a writer from passages directly egotistical. But the qualities which we have ascribed to Milton, though perhaps most strongly marked in those parts of his works which treat of his per-
 25 sonal feelings, are distinguishable in every page, and impart to all his writings, prose and poetry, English, Latin, and Italian, a strong family likeness.

* See Milton's *Minor Poems* (Heath): ¹ Sonnet XII; ² Sonnet III; ³ Sonnet XV; ⁴ Sonnet VI; ⁵ Sonnet XVIII; ⁶ Sonnet XVI.

50. His public conduct was such as was to be expected from a man of a spirit so high and of an intellect so powerful. He lived at one of the most memorable eras in the history of mankind, at the very crisis of the great conflict between Oromasdes and Ari-
 Political conditions in 1608-74. manes,^o liberty and despotism, reason and prejudice. That great battle was fought for no single generation, for no single land. The destinies of the human race were staked on the same cast with the freedom of the English people. Then were first proclaimed those mighty prin-
 ciples which have since worked their way into the depths of the American forests, which have roused Greece from the slavery and degradation of two thousand years,¹ and which, from one end of Europe to the other, have kindled an unquenchable fire in the hearts of the oppressed, and
 loosed the knees of the oppressors with an unwonted fear.

51. Of those principles, then struggling for their infant existence, Milton was the most devoted and eloquent literary champion. We need not say how much we
 The annal-ists of the period. admire his public conduct. But we cannot disguise from ourselves that a large portion of his countrymen still think it unjustifiable. The civil war, indeed, has been more discussed, and is less understood, than any event in English history. The friends of liberty laboured
 under the disadvantage of which the lion in the fable complained so bitterly.² Though they were the conquerors, their enemies were the painters. As a body, the Round-heads had done their utmost to decry and ruin literature; and literature was even with them, as, in the long

¹ Note, p. 82.

² Note, p. 83.

run, it always is with its enemies. The best book on their side of the question is the charming narrative of Mrs. Hutchinson.^o May's History of the Parliament is good ; but it breaks off at the most interesting crisis of the
 5 struggle. The performance of Ludlow^o is foolish and violent ; and most of the later writers who have espoused the same cause, Oldmixon^o for instance, and Catherine Macaulay,^o have, to say the least, been more distinguished by zeal than either by candour or by skill. On the other
 10 side are the most authoritative and the most popular historical works in our language, that of Clarendon,^o and that of Hume.^o The former is not only ably written and full of valuable information, but has also an air of dignity and sincerity which makes even the prejudices and errors
 15 with which it abounds respectable. Hume, from whose fascinating narrative the great mass of the reading public are still contented to take their opinions, hated religion so much that he hated liberty for having been allied with religion, and has pleaded the cause of tyranny with the
 20 dexterity of an advocate while affecting the impartiality of a judge.

52. The public conduct of Milton must be approved or condemned according as the resistance of the people to Charles the First shall appear to be justifiable or
 25 criminal. We shall therefore make no apology for dedicating a few pages to the discussion of that interesting and most important question. We shall not argue it on general grounds. We shall not recur to those primary principles from which the claim
 30 of any government to the obedience of its subjects is to be deduced. We are entitled to that vantage ground ;

(Thesis.)
 "Kinship of the Rebellion and the Revolution."

but we will relinquish it. We are, on this point, so confident of superiority, that we are not unwilling to imitate the ostentatious generosity of those ancient knights, who vowed to joust without helmet or shield against all enemies, and to give their antagonists the advantage of sun and wind. We will take the naked constitutional question. We confidently affirm, that every reason which can be urged in favour of the Revolution of 1688¹ may be urged with at least equal force in favour of what is called the Great Rebellion.²

10

Argument
1. Charles's
religion.

53. In one respect, only, we think, can the warmest admirers of Charles venture to say that he was a better sovereign than his son. He was not, in name and profession, a Papist; we say in name and profession, because both Charles himself and his creature Laud,³ while they abjured the innocent badges of Popery, retained all its worst vices, a complete subjection of reason to authority, a weak preference of form to substance, a childish passion for mummeries, an idolatrous veneration for the priestly character, and, above all, a merciless intolerance.⁴ This, however, we waive. We will concede that Charles was a good Protestant; but we say that his Protestantism does not make the slightest distinction between his case and that of James.

Common
misrepresentation
of the issue.

54. The principles of the Revolution have often been grossly misrepresented, and never more than in the course of the present year. There is a certain class of men, who, while they profess to hold in reverence the great names and great actions of former times,

¹ Int., p. xxv.

² *Ib.*, p. xx.

³ See p. xx, and Index, "Laud."

⁴ Note, p. 83.

never look at them for any other purpose than in order to find in them some excuse for existing abuses.¹ In every venerable precedent they pass by what is essential, and take only what is accidental: they keep out of sight what is beneficial, and hold up to public imitation all that is defective. If, in any part of any great example, there be anything unsound, these flesh-flies detect it with an unerring instinct, and dart upon it with a ravenous delight. If some good end has been attained in spite of them, they feel, with their prototype, that

“Their labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil.”²

55. To the blessings which England has derived from the Revolution these people are utterly insensible. The
 15 expulsion of a tyrant, the solemn recognition of popular rights, liberty, security, toleration, all go for nothing with them. One sect there was, which, Issue was not religion.
 from unfortunate temporary causes, it was thought necessary to keep under close restraint.¹ One part of the
 20 empire there was so unhappily circumstanced, that at that time its misery was necessary to our happiness, and its slavery to our freedom. These are the parts of the Revolution which the politicians of whom we speak, love to contemplate, and which seem to them not indeed to
 25 vindicate, but in some degree to palliate, the good which it has produced. Talk to them of Naples, of Spain, or of South America.¹ They stand forth zealots for the doctrine of Divine Right,³ which has now come back to

¹ Note, p. 83.

² *Paradise Lost*, i. 164.

³ Int., p. xix.

us, like a thief from transportation, under the *alias* of Legitimacy. But mention the miseries of Ireland. Then William is a hero. Then Somers^o and Shrewsbury^o are great men. Then the Revolution is a glorious era. The very same persons who, in this country, never omit an opportunity of reviving every wretched Jacobite^o slander respecting the Whigs¹ of that period, have no sooner crossed St. George's Channel, than they begin to fill their bumpers to the glorious and immortal memory. They may truly boast that they look not at men, but at measures. So that evil be done, they care not who does it; the arbitrary Charles, or the liberal William, Ferdinand the Catholic, or Frederic the Protestant.² On such occasions their deadliest opponents may reckon upon their candid construction. The bold assertions of these people have of late impressed a large portion of the public with an opinion that James the Second was expelled simply because he was a Catholic, and that the Revolution was essentially a Protestant Revolution.

56.. But this certainty was not the case; nor can any person who has acquired more knowledge of the history of those times than is to be found in Goldsmith's^o Issue was
tyranny. Abridgment believe that, if James had held his own religious opinions without wishing to make proselytes, or if, wishing even to make proselytes, he had contented himself with exerting only his constitutional influence for that purpose, the Prince of Orange¹ would ever have been invited over. Our ancestors, we suppose, knew their own meaning; and, if we may believe them, their hostility was primarily not to popery, but to tyranny.

¹ Int., p. xxv.

² Note, p. 84.

They did not drive out a tyrant because he was a Catholic ; but they excluded Catholics from the crown, because they thought them likely to be tyrants. The ground on which they, in their famous resolution,¹ declared the throne vacant, was this, "that James had broken the fundamental laws of the kingdom." Every man, therefore, who approves of the Revolution of 1688 must hold that the breach of fundamental laws on the part of the sovereign justifies resistance. The question, then, is this: Had Charles the First broken the fundamental laws of England?

57. No person can answer in the negative, unless he refuses credit, not merely to all the accusations brought against Charles by his opponents, but to the nar- Charles was
 15 ratives of the warmest Royalists, and to the con- a tyrant,
 fessions of the King himself. If there be any truth in any historian of any party who has related the events of that reign, the conduct of Charles, from his accession to the meeting of the Long Parliament,² had been a continued course of oppression and treachery. Let those who applaud the Revolution, and condemn the Rebellion, mention one act of James the Second to which a parallel is not to be found in the history of his father. Let them lay their fingers on a single article in the Declaration of
 25 Right,¹ presented by the two Houses to William and Mary, which Charles is not acknowledged to have violated. He had, according to the testimony of his own friends, usurped the functions of the legislature, raised taxes without the consent of parliament, and quartered
 30 troops on the people in the most illegal and vexatious

¹ Int., p. xxvi.

² Int., p. xx.

manner. Not a single session of parliament had passed without some unconstitutional attack on the freedom of debate; the right of petition was grossly violated; arbitrary judgments, exorbitant fines, and unwarranted imprisonments, were grievances of daily occurrence. If these things do not justify resistance, the Revolution was treason; if they do, the Great Rebellion was laudable.

58. But, it is said, why not adopt milder measures? Why, after the King had consented to so many reforms, and renounced so many oppressive prerogatives, and an incorrigible tyrant, did the parliament continue to rise in their demands at the risk of provoking a civil war? The ship money¹ had been given up. The Star Chamber^o had been abolished. Provision had been made for the frequent convocation and secure deliberation of parliaments. Why not pursue an end confessedly good by peaceable and regular means? We recur again to the analogy of the Revolution. Why was James driven from the throne? Why was he not retained upon conditions? He too had offered to call a free parliament and to submit to its decision all the matters in dispute. Yet we are in the habit of praising our forefathers, who preferred a revolution, a disputed succession, a dynasty of strangers, twenty years of foreign and intestine war, a standing army, and a national debt,² to the rule, however restricted, of a tried and proved tyrant. The Long Parliament acted on the same principle, and is entitled to the same praise. They could not trust the King. He had no doubt passed salutary laws; but what assurance was there that he would not break them? He had

¹ Int., p. xx.

² Note, p. 84.



CHARLES I

renounced oppressive prerogatives ; but where was the security that he would not resume them? The nation had to deal with a man whom no tie could bind, a man who made and broke promises with equal facility, a man whose honour had been a hundred times pawned, and never redeemed.

59. Here, indeed, the Long Parliament stands on still stronger ground than the Convention of 1688.¹ No action of James can be compared to the conduct of Charles with respect to the Petition of Right.² The Lords and Commons present him with a bill in which the constitutional limits of his power are marked out. He hesitates ; he evades ; at last he bargains to give his assent for five subsidies. The bill receives his solemn assent ; the subsidies are voted ; but no sooner is the tyrant relieved, than he returns at once to all the arbitrary measures which he had bound himself to abandon, and violates all the clauses of the very Act which he had been paid to pass.

60. For more than ten years the people had seen the rights which were theirs by a double claim, by immemorial inheritance and by recent purchase, infringed by the perfidious king who had recognised them. At length circumstances compelled Charles to summon another parliament : another chance was given to our fathers : were they to throw it away as they had thrown away the former? Were they again to be cozened by *le Roi le veut*? Were they again to advance their money on pledges which had been forfeited over and over again? Were they to lay a second

even
worse than
James II.

The Re-
bellion was,
therefore,
inevitable.

¹ Int., p. xxvi.

² *Ib.*, p. xix.

³ Note, p. 84.

Petition of Right at the foot of the throne, to grant another lavish aid in exchange for another unmeaning ceremony, and then to take their departure, till, after ten years more of fraud and oppression, their prince should again require a supply, and again repay it with a perjury? They were compelled to choose whether they would trust a tyrant or conquer him. We think that they chose wisely and nobly.

61. The advocates of Charles, like the advocates of other malefactors against whom overwhelming evidence is produced, generally decline all controversy about the facts, and content themselves with calling testimony to character. He had so many private virtues! And had James the Second no private virtues? Was even Oliver Cromwell,¹ his bitterest enemies themselves being judges, destitute of private virtues? And what, after all, are the virtues ascribed to Charles? A religious zeal, not more sincere than that of his son, and fully as weak and narrow-minded, and a few of the ordinary household decencies which half the tombstones in England claim for those who lie beneath them. A good father! A good husband! Ample apologies indeed for fifteen years of persecution, tyranny, and falsehood!

62. We charge him with having broken his coronation oath; and we are told that he kept his marriage vow! We accuse him of having given up his people to the merciless inflictions of the most hot-headed and hard-hearted of prelates²; and the defence is, that he took his little son on his knee and kissed him! We censure him for having violated

¹ Int., p. xxi.

² Index, "Laud."

the articles of the Petition of Right, after having, for good and valuable consideration, promised to observe them; and we are informed that he was accustomed to hear prayers at six o'clock in the morning! It is to
 5 such considerations as these, together with his Vandyke^o dress, his handsome face, and his peaked beard, that he owes, we verily believe, most of his popularity with the present generation.

63. For ourselves, we own that we do not understand
 10 the common phrase, a good man, but a bad king. We can as easily conceive a good man and an unnatural father, or a good man and a treacherous friend. We cannot, in estimating the character of an indi-
 15 vidual, leave out of our consideration his conduct in the most important of all human relations; and if in that relation we find him to have been selfish, cruel, and deceitful, we shall take the liberty to call him a bad man, in spite of all his temperance at table, and all his regularity at chapel.

20 64. We cannot refrain from adding a few words respecting a topic on which the defenders of Charles are fond of dwelling. If, they say, he governed his people ill, he at least governed them after the
 25 example of his predecessors. If he violated their privileges, it was because those privileges had not been accurately defined. No act of oppression has ever been imputed to him which has not a parallel in the annals of the Tudors. This point Hume^o has laboured, with an art which is as discreditable in a historical work
 30 as it would be admirable in a forensic address.¹ The

The principle involved.

Argument 3. "He followed precedent."

¹ See Hume's *History of England*, Appendix III (to Chap. XLIV).

answer is short, clear, and decisive. Charles had assented to the Petition of Right. He had renounced the oppressive powers said to have been exercised by his predecessors, and he had renounced them for money.¹ He was not entitled to set up his antiquated claims against his own recent release.

65. These arguments are so obvious, that it may seem superfluous to dwell upon them. But those who have
 Comment. observed how much the events of that time are misrepresented and misunderstood, will not blame us for stating the case simply. It is a case of which the simplest statement is the strongest.

66. The enemies of the Parliament, indeed, rarely choose to take issue on the great points of the question.
 Argument They content themselves with exposing some of the
 4. Ex- crimes and follies to which public commotions
 cesses of necessarily give birth. They bewail the unmerited
 the Rebels. fate of Strafford.^o They execrate the lawless violence of the army. They laugh at the Scriptural names of the preachers. Major-generals fleecing their districts ; soldiers revelling on the spoils of a ruined peasantry ; upstarts, enriched by the public plunder, taking possession of the hospitable firesides and hereditary trees of the old gentry ; boys smashing the beautiful windows of cathedrals ; Quakers riding naked through the market-place ; Fifth-monarchy-men^o shouting for King Jesus ; agitators lecturing from the tops of tubs on the fate of Agag^o ; — all these, they tell us, were the offspring of the Great Rebellion.²

67. Be it so. We are not careful to answer in this

¹ Note, p. 85.

² Int., p. xxi.

matter. These charges, were they infinitely more important, would not alter our opinion of an event which alone has made us to differ from the slaves who crouch beneath despotic sceptres.¹ Many evils, These were necessary evils. no doubt, were produced by the civil war. They were the price of our liberty. Has the acquisition been worth the sacrifice? It is the nature of the Devil of tyranny to tear and rend the body which he leaves. Are the miseries of continued possession less horrible than
 10 the struggles of the tremendous exorcism?

68. If it were possible that a people brought up under an intolerant and arbitrary system could subvert that system without acts of cruelty and folly, half the objections to despotic power would be removed. They were fruits of tyranny.
 15 We should, in that case, be compelled to acknowledge that it at least produces no pernicious effects on the intellectual and moral character of a nation. We deplore the outrages which accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages, the more assured we feel
 20 that a revolution was necessary. The violence of those outrages will always be proportioned to the ferocity and ignorance of the people; and the ferocity and ignorance of the people will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation under which they have been accustomed to
 25 live. Thus it was in our civil war. The heads of the church and state reaped only that which they had sown. The government had prohibited free discussion: it had done its best to keep the people unacquainted with their duties and their rights. The retribution was just and
 30 natural. If our rulers suffered from popular ignorance,

¹ Note, p. 85.

it was because they had themselves taken away the key of knowledge. If they were assailed with blind fury, it was because they had exacted an equally blind submission.

69. It is the character of such revolutions that we always see the worst of them at first. Till men have been for some time free, they know not how to use their freedom. The natives of wine countries are generally sober. In climates where wine is a rarity intemperance abounds. A newly liberated people may be compared to a northern army encamped on the Rhine or the Xeres.^o It is said that, when soldiers in such a situation first find themselves able to indulge without restraint in such a rare and expensive luxury, nothing is to be seen but intoxication. Soon, however, plenty teaches discretion; and, after wine has been for a few months their daily fare, they become more temperate than they had ever been in their own country. In the same manner, the final and permanent fruits of liberty are wisdom, moderation, and mercy. Its immediate effects are often atrocious crimes, conflicting errors, scepticism on points the most clear, dogmatism on points the most mysterious. It is just at this crisis that its enemies love to exhibit it. They pull down the scaffolding from the half-finished edifice: they point to the flying dust, the falling bricks, the comfortless rooms, the frightful irregularity of the whole appearance; and then ask in scorn where the promised splendour and comfort is to be found. If such miserable sophisms were to prevail there would never be a good house or a good government in the world.

70. Ariosto^o tells a pretty story ¹ of a fairy, who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the
 5 period of her disguise were for ever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her, she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which was natural to her,
 10 accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings.² But woe to those who in disgust shall
 15 venture to crush her ! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory !

71. There is only one cure for the evils which newly
 20 acquired freedom produces : and that cure is freedom. When a prisoner first leaves his cell he cannot bear the light of day : he is unable to discriminate
 colours, or recognise faces. But the remedy is, not
 to remand him into his dungeon, but to accustom him
 25 to the rays of the sun. The blaze of truth and liberty may at first dazzle and bewilder nations which have become half blind in the house of bondage. But let them gaze on, and they will soon be able to bear it. In a few years men learn to reason. The extreme violence
 30 of opinions subsides. Hostile theories correct each

They are
the mask of
Liberty.

They are
cured by
Liberty,

¹ *Orlando Furioso*, Canto XLIII.

² Note, p. 85.

other. The scattered elements of truth cease to contend, and begin to coalesce. And at length a system of justice and order is educed out of the chaos.

72. Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition, that no people 5
and not ought to be free till they are fit to use their free-
otherwise. dom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old
story, who resolved not to go into the water till he had
learnt to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they
become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait 10
for ever.)

73. Therefore it is that we decidedly approve of the
conduct of Milton and the other wise and good men who,
Execution of Charles in spite of much that was ridiculous and hateful in
theoretically justifi- the conduct of their associates, stood firmly by the 15
able, cause of Public Liberty. We are not aware that
the poet has been charged with personal participation
in any of the blameable excesses of that time. The
favourite topic of his enemies is the line of conduct
which he pursued with regard to the execution of the 20
King. Of that celebrated proceeding we by no means
approve. Still we must say, in justice to the many eminent
persons who concurred in it, and in justice more particularly
to the eminent person who defended it, that nothing can be more
absurd than the imputations which, 25
for the last hundred and sixty years, it has been the
fashion to cast upon the Regicides.¹ We have, throughout,
abstained from appealing to first principles. We will not appeal
to them now. We recur again to the

¹ Note, p. 85.

parallel case of the Revolution. What essential distinction can be drawn between the execution of the father and the deposition of the son? What constitutional maxim is there which applies to the former and not to the latter? The King can do no wrong. If so, James was as innocent as Charles could have been. The minister only ought to be responsible for the acts of the Sovereign. If so, why not impeach Jefferies^o and retain James? The person of a king is sacred. Was the person of James considered sacred at the Boyne^o? To discharge cannon against an army in which a King is known to be posted is to approach pretty near to regicide. Charles, too, it should always be remembered, was put to death by men who had been exasperated by the hostilities of several years, and who had never been bound to him by any other tie than that which was common to them with all their fellow-citizens. Those who drove James from his throne, who seduced his army, who alienated his friends, who first imprisoned him in his palace, and then turned him out of it, who broke in upon his very slumbers by imperious messages, who pursued him with fire and sword from one part of the empire to another, who hanged, drew, and quartered his adherents, and attainted his innocent heir, were his nephew and his two daughters.¹ When we reflect on all these things, we are at a loss to conceive how the same persons who, on the fifth of November,¹ thank God for wonderfully conducting his servant William, and for making all opposition fall before him until he became our King and Governor, can, on the thirtieth of Janu-

¹ Note, p. 85.

ary,¹ contrive to be afraid that the blood of the Royal Martyr may be visited on themselves and their children.

74. We disapprove, we repeat, of the execution of Charles ; not because the constitution exempts the King

but practi- from responsibility, for we know that all such max- 5
cally a ims, however excellent, have their exceptions ; nor
blunder. because we feel any peculiar interest in his character,
for we think that his sentence describes him with perfect
justice as “ a tyrant, a traitor, a murderer, and a public
enemy ” ; but because we are convinced that the measure 10
was most injurious to the cause of freedom. He whom it
removed was a captive and a hostage : his heir, to whom
the allegiance of every Royalist was instantly transferred,
was at large. The Presbyterians² could never have been
perfectly reconciled to the father : they had no such 15
rooted enmity to the son. The great body of the peo-
ple, also, contemplated that proceeding with feelings
which, however unreasonable, no government could
safely venture to outrage.

75. But though we think the conduct of the Regicides 20
blameable, that of Milton appears to us in a very differ-

Milton's ent light. The deed was done. It could not be
attitude undone. The evil was incurred ; and the object
justifiable. was to render it as small as possible. We censure
the chiefs of the army for not yielding to the popular 25
opinion ; but we cannot censure Milton for wishing to
change that opinion. The very feeling which would
have restrained us from committing the act would have
led us, after it had been committed, to defend it against
the ravings of servility and superstition. For the sake 30

¹ Note, p. 85.

² Int., p. xviii and p. xx.

of public liberty, we wish that the thing had not been done, while the people disapproved of it. But, for the sake of public liberty, we should also have wished the people to approve of it when it was done. If anything more
 5 were wanting to the justification of Milton, the book of Salmasius^o would furnish it. That miserable performance is now with justice considered only as a beacon to word-catchers who wish to become statesmen. The celebrity of the man who refuted it, the "*Æneæ magni dextra*,"¹
 10 tra,"¹ gives it all its fame with the present generation. In that age the state of things was different. It was not then fully understood how vast an interval separates the mere classical scholar from the political philosopher. Nor can it be doubted that a treatise which, bearing the
 15 name of so eminent a critic, attacked the fundamental principles of all free governments, must, if suffered to remain unanswered, have produced a most pernicious effect on the public mind.

76. We wish to add a few words relative to another
 20 subject, on which the enemies of Milton delight to dwell, his conduct during the administration of the Protector.² That an enthusiastic votary of liberty
 should accept office under a military usurper
 seems, no doubt, at first sight, extraordinary. But all
 25 the circumstances in which the country was then placed were extraordinary. The ambition of Oliver was of no vulgar kind. He never seems to have coveted despotic power. He at first fought sincerely and manfully for the Parliament, and never deserted it, till it had deserted its
 30 duty. If he dissolved it by force,² it was not till he found

¹ Note, p. 85.

² Int., p. xxi.

that the few members who remained after so many deaths, secessions, and expulsions, were desirous to appropriate to themselves a power which they held only in trust, and to inflict upon England the curse of a Venetian oligarchy. But even when thus placed by violence at the head of 5 affairs, he did not assume unlimited power. He gave the country a constitution far more perfect than any which had at that time been known in the world. He reformed the representative system in a manner which has extorted praise even from Lord Clarendon.^o For himself he de- 10 manded indeed the first place in the commonwealth ; but with powers scarcely so great as those of a Dutch stadtholder, or an American president. He gave the Parliament a voice in the appointment of ministers, and left to it the whole legislative authority, not even reserving to 15 himself a veto on its enactments ; and he did not require that the chief magistracy should be hereditary in his family. Thus far, we think, if the circumstances of the time and the opportunities which he had of aggrandising himself be fairly considered, he will not lose by comparison 20 with Washington or Bolivar.^o Had his moderation been met by corresponding moderation, there is no reason to think that he would have overstepped the line which he had traced for himself. But when he found that his parliaments questioned the authority under which they 25 met, and that he was in danger of being deprived of the restricted power which was absolutely necessary to his personal safety, then, it must be acknowledged, he adopted a more arbitrary policy.

77. Yet, though we believe that the intentions of 30 Cromwell were at first honest, though we believe that

he was driven from the noble course which he had marked out for himself by the almost irresistible force of circumstances, though we admire, in common with all men of all parties, the ability and energy of his splendid administration, we are not pleading for arbitrary and lawless power, even in his hands. We know that a good constitution is infinitely better than the best despot. But we suspect, that at the time of which we speak, the violence of religious and political enmities rendered a stable and happy settlement next to impossible. The choice lay, not between Cromwell and liberty, but between Cromwell and the Stuarts. That Milton chose well, no man can doubt who fairly compares the events of the Protectorate with those of the thirty years which succeeded it, the darkest and most disgraceful in the English annals. Cromwell was evidently laying, though in an irregular manner, the foundations of an admirable system. Never before had religious liberty and the freedom of discussion been enjoyed in a greater degree. Never had the national honour been better upheld abroad, or the seat of justice better filled at home. And it was rarely that any opposition which stopped short of open rebellion provoked the resentment of the liberal and magnanimous usurper. The institutions which he had established, as set down in the Instrument of Government,¹ and the Humble Petition and Advice,¹ were excellent. His practice, it is true, too often departed from the theory of these institutions. But, had he lived a few years longer, it is probable that his institutions would have survived him, and that his

It was practically commendable.

¹ Int., p. xxi.

arbitrary practice would have died with him. His power had not been consecrated by ancient prejudices. It was upheld only by his great personal qualities. Little, therefore, was to be dreaded from a second protector, unless he were also a second Oliver Cromwell. The events which followed his decease are the most complete vindication of those who exerted themselves to uphold his authority. His death dissolved the whole frame of society. The army rose against the parliament, the different corps of the army against each other. Sect raved against sect. Party plotted against party. The Presbyterians, in their eagerness to be revenged on the Independents, sacrificed their own liberty, and deserted all their old principles. Without casting one glance on the past, or requiring one stipulation for the future, they threw down their freedom at the feet of the most frivolous and heartless of tyrants.

78. Then came those days, never to be recalled without a blush, the days of servitude without loyalty, and sensuality without love, of dwarfish talents and gigantic

Proof from
later condi-
tions.

vices, the paradise of cold hearts and narrow minds, the golden age of the coward, the bigot, and the slave. The King cringed to his rival that he might trample on his people, sank into a viceroy of France, and pocketed, with complacent infamy, her degrading insults, and her more degrading gold. The caresses of harlots, and the jests of buffoons, regulated the policy of the state. The government had just ability enough to deceive, and just religion enough to persecute. The principles of liberty were the scoff of every grinning courtier, and the Anathema Maranatha of every fawning dean. In every high

place, worship was paid to Charles and James, Belial^o and Moloch^o; and England propitiated those obscene and cruel idols with the blood of her best and bravest children. Crime succeeded to crime, and disgrace to disgrace, till the race accursed of God and man was a second time driven forth, to wander on the face of the earth, and to be a by-word and a shaking of the head to the nations.

79. Most of the remarks which we have hitherto made on the public character of Milton, apply to him only as one of a large body. We shall proceed to notice some of the peculiarities which distinguished him from his contemporaries. And, for that purpose, it is necessary to take a short survey of the parties into which the political world was at that time divided. We must premise, that our observations are intended to apply only to those who adhered, from a sincere preference, to one or to the other side. In days of public commotion, every faction, like an Oriental army, is attended by a crowd of camp-followers, an useless and heartless rabble, who prowl round its line of march in the hope of picking up something under its protection, but desert it in the day of battle, and often join to exterminate it after a defeat. England, at the time of which we are treating, abounded with fickle and selfish politicians, who transferred their support to every government as it rose, who kissed the hand of the King in 1640, and spat in his face in 1649, who shouted with equal glee when Cromwell was inaugurated in Westminster Hall, and when he was dug up to be hanged at Tyburn,¹ who dined on calves' heads, or

Parties
during the
Rebellion.

* ¹ Int., p. xxii.

stuck up oak-branches,¹ as circumstances altered, without the slightest shame or repugnance. These we leave out of the account. We take our estimate of parties from those who really deserve to be called partisans.

80. We would speak first of the Puritans,² the most remarkable body of men, perhaps, which the world has ever produced. The odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration, they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage were most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were, as a body, unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces, their Hebrew names, the Scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers.³ But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy of history is to be learnt. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence of

¹ Note, p. 85.

² Int., p. xviii.

³ Note, p. 86.

that potent ridicule which has already misled so many excellent writers.

“Ecco il fonte del riso, ed ecco il rio
 Che mortali perigli in se contiene :
 5 Hor qui tener a fren nostro desio,
 Ed esser cauti molto a noi conviene.” * 1

81. Those who roused the people to resistance, who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years, who formed, out of the most unpromising Their real materials, the finest army that Europe had ever character. seen, who trampled down King, Church, and Aristocracy, who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth, were no vulgar fanatics. 15 Most of their absurdities were mere external badges, like the signs of freemasonry, or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body to whose courage and talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of 20 Charles the First, or the easy good-breeding for which the court of Charles the Second was celebrated. But, if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio ° in the play, turn from the specious caskets which contain only 25 the Death's head and the Fool's head, and fix on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

82. The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests. Not content Their in- with acknowledging, in general terms, an overruling centives.

¹ Note, p. 86.

* *La Gerusalemme Liberata*, XV. 57.

Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being, for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know him, to serve him, to enjoy him, was with them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on his intolerable brightness, and to commune with him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and the meanest of mankind seemed to vanish, when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognised no title to superiority but his favour; and, confident of that favour, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems crowns of glory which should never fade away. On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt: for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very

meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged, on whose slightest action the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest, who had been destined, before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which short-sighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes, had been ordained on his account. For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed. 10 For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed his will by the pen of the Evangelist, and the harp of the prophet. He had been wrested by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly 15 sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the rocks had been rent, that the dead had risen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God.¹

83. Thus the Puritan was made up of two different 20 men, the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion, the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker : but he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions, and groans, and tears. He was half-maddened by 25 glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane,^o he thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of the millennial year.¹ 30

¹ Note, p. 86.

Like Fleetwood,^o he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid his face from him. But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them. People who saw 5 nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate or in the field of battle. These fanatics 10 brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment and an immutability of purpose which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them 15 tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. En- 20 thusiasm had made them Stoics,^o had cleared their minds from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and of corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went through 25 the world, like Sir Artegal's^o iron man Talus with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities, insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain, not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be 30 withstood by any barrier.

84. Such we believe to have been the character of the Puritans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners. We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their
 5 minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach : and we know that, in spite of their hatred of Popery, they too often fell into the worst vices of that bad system, intolerance and extravagant austerity, that they had their anchorites and their crusades,
 10 their Dunstans,^o and their De Montforts,^o their Dominics^o and their Escobars. Yet, when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest, and an useful body.

Summary
of their
qualities.

85. The Puritans espoused the cause of civil liberty
 15 mainly because it was the cause of religion. There was another party, by no means numerous, but distinguished by learning and ability, which acted with them on very different principles. We speak of those whom Cromwell was accustomed to call the
 20 Heathens, men who were, in the phraseology of that time, doubting Thomases^o or careless Gallios^o with regard to religious subjects, but passionate worshippers of freedom. Heated by the study of ancient literature, they set up their country as their idol, and proposed to themselves
 25 the heroes of Plutarch^o as their examples. They seem to have borne some resemblance to the Brissotines^o of the French Revolution. But it is not very easy to draw the line of distinction between them and their devout associates, whose tone and manner they sometimes found it
 30 convenient to affect, and sometimes, it is probable, imperceptibly adopted.

The "Heathens."
Their classicism.

86. We now come to the Royalists. We shall attempt to speak of them, as we have spoken of their antagonists, with perfect candour. We shall not charge upon a whole party the profligacy and baseness of the horseboys, gamblers, and bravoës, whom the hope of license and plunder attracted from all the dens of Whitefriars^o to the standard of Charles, and who disgraced their associates by excesses which, under the stricter discipline of the Parliamentary armies, were never tolerated. We will select a more favourable specimen. Thinking as we do that the cause of the King was the cause of bigotry and tyranny, we yet cannot refrain from looking with complacency on the character of the honest old Cavaliers. We feel a national pride in comparing them with the instruments which the despots of other countries are compelled to employ, with the mutes who throng their ante-chambers, and the Janisaries^o who mount guard at their gates. Our royalist countrymen were not heartless, dangling courtiers, bowing at every step, and simpering at every word. They were not mere machines for destruction dressed up in uniforms, caned into skill, intoxicated into valour, defending without love, destroying without hatred. There was a freedom in their subserviency, a nobleness in their very degradation. The sentiment of individual independence was strong within them. They were indeed misled, but by no base or selfish motive. Compassion and romantic honour, the prejudices of childhood, and the venerable names of history, threw over them a spell potent as that of Duessa^o; and, like the Red-Cross Knight, they thought that they were doing battle for an

The Royal-
ists. Their
romanti-
cism.

injured beauty, while they defended a false and loathsome sorceress. In truth they scarcely entered at all into the merits of the political question. It was not for a treacherous king or an intolerant church that they fought, but for the old banner which had waved in so many battles over the heads of their fathers, and for the altars at which they had received the hands of their brides. Though nothing could be more erroneous than their political opinions, they possessed, in a far greater degree than their adversaries, those qualities which are the grace of private life. With many of the vices of the Round Table,^o they had also many of its virtues, courtesy, generosity, veracity, tenderness, and respect for women. They had far more both of profound and of polite learning than the Puritans. Their manners were more engaging, their tempers more amiable, their tastes more elegant, and their households more cheerful.

87. Milton did not strictly belong to any of the classes which we have described. He was not a Puritan. He was not a freethinker. He was not a Royalist. Milton. In his character the noblest qualities of every party His unique character. were combined in harmonious union. From the Parliament and from the Court, from the conventicle and from the Gothic cloister, from the gloomy and sepulchral circles of the Roundheads, and from the Christmas revel of the hospitable Cavalier, his nature selected and drew to itself whatever was great and good, while it rejected all the base and pernicious ingredients by which those finer elements were defiled. Like the Puritans, he lived

“As ever in his great task-master's eye.” *

Like them, he kept his mind continually fixed on an Almighty Judge and an eternal reward. And hence he acquired their contempt of external circumstances, their fortitude, their tranquillity, their inflexible resolution. But 5 not the coolest sceptic or the most profane scoffer was more perfectly free from the contagion of their frantic delusions, their savage manners, their ludicrous jargon, their scorn of science, and their aversion to pleasure. Hating tyranny with a perfect hatred, he had nevertheless 10 all the estimable and ornamental qualities which were almost entirely monopolised by the party of the tyrant. There was none who had a stronger sense of the value of literature, a finer relish for every elegant amusement, or a more chivalrous delicacy of honour and love. Though 15 his opinions were democratic, his tastes and his associations were such as harmonise best with monarchy and aristocracy. He was under the influence of all the feelings by which the gallant Cavaliers were misled. But of those feelings he was the master and not the slave. Like 20 the hero of Homer,^o he enjoyed all the pleasures of fascination; but he was not fascinated. He listened to the songs of the Syrens; yet he glided by without being seduced to their fatal shore. He tasted the cup of Circe^o; but he bore about him a sure antidote against the effects of its bewitching sweetness.¹ The illusions which captivated his imagination never impaired his reasoning powers. The statesman was proof against the splendour, the solemnity, and the romance which en-

* See Milton's *Minor Poems* (Heath), Sonnet I.

¹ Note, p. 86.

chanted the poet. Any person who will contrast the sentiments expressed in his treatises on Prelacy with the exquisite lines on ecclesiastical architecture and music in the *Penseroso*,¹ which was published about the same
 5 time, will understand our meaning. This is an inconsistency which, more than anything else, raises his character in our estimation, because it shows how many private tastes and feelings he sacrificed, in order to do what he considered his duty to mankind. It is the very
 10 struggle of the noble Othello.^o His heart relents; but his hand is firm. He does nought in hate, but all in honour. He kisses the beautiful deceiver before he destroys her.

88. That from which the public character of Milton
 15 derives its great and peculiar splendour still remains to be mentioned. If he exerted himself to overthrow a forsworn king and a persecuting hierarchy, he
 exerted himself in conjunction with others. But the glory of the battle which he fought for the species of
 20 freedom which is the most valuable, and which was then the least understood, the freedom of the human mind, is all his own. Thousands and tens of thousands among his contemporaries raised their voices against Ship-
 money^o and the Star-chamber.^o But there were few
 25 indeed who discerned the more fearful evils of moral and intellectual slavery, and the benefits which would result from the liberty of the press² and the unfettered exercise of private judgment. These were the objects which Milton justly conceived to be the most important.
 30 He was desirous that the people should think for them-

¹ Note, p. 86.

² Index, "Censorship."

selves as well as tax themselves, and should be emancipated from the dominion of prejudice as well as from that of Charles. He knew that those who, with the best intentions, overlooked these schemes of reform, and contented themselves with pulling down the King and imprisoning the malignants, acted like the heedless brothers in his own poem, who, in their eagerness to disperse the train of the sorcerer, neglected the means of liberating the captive. They thought only of conquering when they should have thought of disenchanting.

10

“Oh, ye mistook! Ye should have snatched his wand
And bound him fast. Without the rod reversed,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the lady that sits here
Bound in strong fetters fixed and motionless.” * 1

15

His
achieve-
ment,

89. To reverse the rod, to spell the charm backward, to break the ties which bound a stupefied people to the seat of enchantment, was the noble aim of Milton. To this all his public conduct was directed. For this he joined the Presbyterians; for this he forsook them. He fought their perilous battle; but he turned away with disdain from their insolent triumph. He saw that they, like those whom they had vanquished, were hostile to the liberty of thought. He therefore joined the Independents, and called upon Cromwell to break the secular chain, and to save free conscience from the paw of the Presbyterian wolf.¹ With a view to the same great object, he attacked the licensing system,² in that sublime treatise which every statesman should wear

* *Comus*, 815-819.

¹ Note, p. 86.

² Index, “Censorship.”

as a sign upon his hand and as frontlets between his eyes.¹ His attacks were, in general, directed less against particular abuses than against those deeply seated errors on which almost all abuses are founded, the servile
 5 worship of eminent men and the irrational dread of
innovation.

90. That he might shake the foundations of these debasing sentiments more effectually, he always selected for himself the boldest literary services. He never
 10 came up in the rear, when the outworks had been ^{Milton's} prose
 carried and the breach entered. He pressed into ^{works.} the forlorn hope. At the beginning of the changes, he wrote with incomparable energy and eloquence against the bishops. But, when his opinion seemed likely to
 15 prevail, he passed on to other subjects, and abandoned prelacy to the crowd of writers who now hastened to insult a falling party. There is no more hazardous enterprise than that of bearing the torch of truth into those dark and infected recesses in which no light has
 20 ever shone. But it was the choice and the pleasure of Milton to penetrate the noisome vapours, and to brave the terrible explosion. Those who most disapprove of his opinions must respect the hardihood with which he maintained them. He, in general, left to others the
 25 credit of expounding and defending the popular parts of his religious and political creed. He took his own stand upon those which the great body of his countrymen reprobated as criminal, or derided as paradoxical. He stood up for divorce and regicide. He attacked

¹ Note, p. 87.

the prevailing systems of education. His radiant and beneficent career resembled that of the god of light and fertility.

"Nitor in adversum; nec me, qui cætera, vincit

Impetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi." ¹

5

Their general excellence.

91. It is to be regretted that the prose writings of Milton should, in our time, be so little read. As compositions, they deserve the attention of every man who wishes to become acquainted with the full power of the English language. They abound with passages compared with which the finest declamations of Burke° sink into insignificance. They are a perfect field of cloth of gold. The style is stiff with gorgeous embroidery. Not even in the earlier books of the *Paradise Lost* has the great poet ever risen higher than in those parts of his controversial works in which his feelings, excited by conflict, find a vent in bursts of devotional and lyric rapture. It is, to borrow his own majestic language, "a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies." *

20

Their special merits.

92. We had intended to look more closely at these performances, to analyse the peculiarities of the diction, to dwell at some length on the sublime wisdom of the *Areopagitica* † and the nervous rhetoric of the *Iconoclast*, † and to point out some of those magnificent passages which occur in the *Treatise of Reformation*, † and the *Animadversions on the Remonstrant*. † But the length to which our remarks have already extended renders this impossible.

¹ Note, p. 87. * *The Reason of Church Government*, Bk. ii.

† See list of Milton's Works, p. xxix.

93. We must conclude. And yet we can scarcely tear ourselves away from the subject. The days immediately following the publication of this relic of Milton Pen-picture of Milton. appear to be peculiarly set apart, and consecrated
 5 to his memory. And we shall scarcely be censured if, on this his festival, we be found lingering near his shrine, how worthless soever may be the offering which we bring to it. While this book lies on our table, we seem to be contemporaries of the writer. We are transported a hundred and fifty years back. We can almost fancy that we
 10 are visiting him in his small lodging; that we see him sitting at the old organ beneath the faded green hangings; that we can catch the quick twinkle of his eyes, rolling in vain to find the day; that we are reading in the lines
 15 of his noble countenance the proud and mournful history of his glory and his affliction. We image to ourselves the breathless silence in which we should listen to his slightest word, the passionate veneration with which we should kneel to kiss his hand and weep upon it, the earnestness
 20 with which we should endeavour to console him, if indeed such a spirit could need consolation, for the neglect of an age unworthy of his talents and his virtues, the eagerness with which we should contest with his daughters, or with his Quaker friend Elwood,^o the privilege of reading
 25 Homer to him, or of taking down the immortal accents which flowed from his lips.¹

94. These are perhaps foolish feelings. Yet we cannot be ashamed of them; nor shall we be sorry if what we have written shall in any degree excite them in
 30 other minds. We are not much in the habit of Abiding value of his work.

¹ Note, p. 87.

idolising either the living or the dead. And we think that there is no more certain indication of a weak and ill-regulated intellect than that propensity which, for want of a better name, we will venture to christen Boswellism.^o But there are a few characters which have stood the closest scrutiny and the severest tests, which have been tried in the furnace and have proved pure, which have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting, which have been declared sterling by the general consent of mankind, and which are visibly stamped with the image and superscription of the Most High. These great men we trust that we know how to prize; and of these was Milton. The sight of his books, the sound of his name, are pleasant to us. His thoughts resemble those celestial fruits and flowers which the Virgin Martyr of Massinger^o sent down from the gardens of Paradise to the earth, and which were distinguished from the productions of other soils, not only by superior bloom and sweetness, but by miraculous efficacy to invigorate and to heal.¹ They are powerful, not only to delight, but to elevate and purify. Nor do we envy the man who can study either the life or the writings of the great poet and patriot, without aspiring to emulate, not indeed the sublime works with which his genius has enriched our literature, but the zeal with which he laboured for the public good, the fortitude with which he endured every private calamity, the lofty disdain with which he looked down on temptations and dangers, the deadly hatred which he bore to bigots and tyrants, and the faith which he so sternly kept with his country and with his fame.

¹ Note, p. 87.

NOTES, EXPLANATORY AND ILLUSTRATIVE.

2. 5. Professor Masson, the leading authority on Milton's life and writings, has shown that Daniel Skinner (a relative of the Cyriac Skinner mentioned in p. 1, l. 13) served as amanuensis for Milton, and undertook to secure the publication of the treatise *De Doctrina Christiana*. The system of censorship then prevailing forbade its publication in England (see Index, "Censorship"), and it was sent to Amsterdam to be printed. But enough pressure was brought to bear upon Skinner to secure its suppression, and it was returned to England and placed in safe keeping in the office of the Secretary of State, where it was rediscovered by Mr. Lemon in 1823.

23. The Pharisees were a Hebrew sect, noted for their rigid adherence to the letter of the prescriptions of their religious organization, especially in the matter of avoiding technical defilement, through contact with persons and things declared unclean by their code. So classical students who submit to academic rules of composition would carefully avoid using many expressions not found in classical authors, while Milton would have no scruples about using them.

3. 7. "Horace his wit and Virgil's state
He did not steal, but emulate;
And when he would like them appear,
Their garb, but not their clothes did wear."

DENHAM, *Elegy on Cowley*.

18. Milton had published four books on the subject of divorce (1644-1645) during the period of temporary estrangement from his first wife. In these he took the extreme ground that marriage ties should be severed by common consent whenever the love that should sanctify marriage had ceased to exist. At the same time he had (without legal divorce from his wife) begun to make overtures toward marriage with another lady. Thus readers at all acquainted with his life should not have been surprised at the theories on polygamy broached in the new-found treatise.

23, 24. Milton's propositions in regard to the subjects here mentioned were the logical outcome of his fundamental religious belief, that

from God every existing thing was created. From this he deduced as corollaries the theories (1) that Christ, the "Son of God," was created at some definite point of time by God, and therefore has not existed from all eternity, and is not equal with his Father except by the decree of the latter ("Arianism," l. 17); (2) that matter, created out of God, shares the divine quality of its origin, and cannot suffer annihilation; (It is interesting to note that the question whether annihilation is possible was raised for the first time in the history of the Universe by a fallen angel, in Hell. See *P. L.* II. 153, 154); (3) that the Son of God to whom absolute power had been delegated, had the power to abrogate the Jewish Sabbath, and therefore its observance was not obligatory.

5. 24. In his *Life of Milton*, Johnson writes: "There prevailed in his time an opinion that the world was in its decay, and that we have had the misfortune to be produced in the decrepitude of Nature. It was suspected that the whole creation languished, that neither trees nor animals had the height or bulk of their predecessors, and that everything was daily sinking by gradual diminution. Milton appears to suspect that souls partake of the general degeneracy, and is not without some fear that his book is to be written in *an age too late* for heroick poesy." He then proceeds to ridicule Milton's noble ambition to "leave something so written to after times, as they should not willingly let it die," and represents Milton's ambition as a merely vulgar wish to be "the giant of the pygmies, the one-eyed monarch of the blind."

12. 1. The reference is to a passage in Johnson's *Life of Milton*, in which he says: "He was at this time eminently skilled in the Latin tongue . . . but the products of his vernal fertility have been surpassed by many, and particularly by his contemporary, Cowley."

16. 30. The typical Greek drama differed from that of modern times in the larger proportion of the lyric element which it contained. The chorus was the dominant feature, the meagre incidents of the play serving mainly as incentives to long lyric outbursts by the chorus, expressing emotions appropriate to the action. The dramatist thus conveyed to his audience what *he thought*, and *wished them to feel* about the incidents of the drama, instead of allowing these to occupy the attention of the audience and provoke the appropriate emotions by their own impressiveness, as in the modern tragedy. In the *Samson*, Milton makes use of a chorus, but fails to make its utterances vital to the expression of the dramatic ideas, and fails to free himself wholly from the influence of modern dramatic conceptions. The language of the chorus is too often that of the intellect rather than of the feelings.

20. 2. In the *Comus*, an angel is sent by God to Earth to protect the heroine and her two brothers from the assaults of an enchanter. In order to avoid attracting attention, this angel disguises himself by

assuming "the weeds and likeness of a swain" named Thyrsis, who is in the service of the children's father. When his task is completed, the angel throws aside his disguise, with the words : —

"To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where Day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky.
There I suck the liquid air
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree.
Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring ;
The Graces and the rosy-bosomed Hours
Thither all their bounties bring.
There eternal summer dwells,
And west winds with musky wing
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard and cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purpled scarf can shew,
And drenches with Elysian dew —

But now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bowed welkin slow doth bend,
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.

Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue ; she alone is free.
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime ;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her."

22. 15. The *Divine Comedy* describes in its three Books (*L'Inferno*, *Il Purgatorio*, *Il Paradiso*) the passage of Dante through the regions of Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven. Hell is described as a region situated within the crust of the earth in the eastern hemisphere, composed of nine huge circles disposed at different levels on the inner circumference of a hollow cone ; they consequently narrow successively in size

from the vast outermost one to a tenth circle or abyss placed at the centre of the earth. In each circle are placed the sinners appropriate to that grade.

The sixth circle contains tombs (l. 19) in which are confined the arch-heretics of all ages, suffering eternally the torture of fire. The seventh contains souls condemned to Hell because in them the brute nature, exhibited in acts of violence and lust, has been permitted to dominate and destroy the divine nature. The cataract of Phlegethon (l. 17), which flows from the sixth to the seventh circle, is fed by a stream which has its source in the ever dripping tears of the wretched inhabitants of the upper world.

First becoming manifest in the seventh circle, the stream, rapidly increasing in size, falls, in the cataract here referred to, into "Malebolge," the eighth circle, and thence into the lowest circle. Here it freezes into ice about the body of traitors, the chiefest of sinners, lowest of whom is Lucifer, the arch-fiend. The several passages referred to in the text are as follows:—

14. "The place where down the bank our way we took,
Was Alp-like, and the view that met us there,
Such that for fear each eye away would look.
*So doth that ruin beyond Trent appear,
Which on the flank into the Adige dashed,
Through earthquake or through prop that failed to bear;
For from the mountain top whence down it crashed
E'en to the plain the rock so falls away,
That one above might climb o'er stones detached."*
Inferno, XII. 1+. (Plumptre's Translation; Heath.)
17. "*E'en as that stream which takes its separate course,
And from Mount Veso eastward first doth flow,
And down the Apennino's left slope pours,
Which men above as Acquacheta know,
Ere it rush down into its torrent bed,
And lose that name at Torli far below,
Above San Benedetto murmurs dread
From Alps, whence it in single leap doth run,
Where should be room for full a thousand head;
Thus headlong from a bank or broken down,
We heard those waters dark so loudly roar,
That soon they had had power our ears to stun.*" — *Ibid.* IX. 94+.
19. "*As when the Rhone stagnates o'er Arli's plain,
Or as at Pola near Quarnaro's shore,
Italia's limit, bordered by the main,*

*With sepulchres the earth is studded o'er,
So rose they there on every side around,
Saving that here the fashion grieved me more,
For flames were scattered o'er each burial mound."*

— *Ibid.* IX. 112+

28. The passage, which describes Satan lying on the burning lake in the midst of Hell, stupefied by the shock of his terrible fall when hurled headlong from Heaven by the hand of God, is as follows: —

" Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim the ocean stream.
Him, haply slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff,
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixèd anchor in his scaly rind,
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wishèd morn delays.
So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay,
Chained on the burning lake." — *P. L. I.* 192+.

23. 1. The passage is as follows: —

" While thus he spake, the angelic squadron bright
Turned fiery red, sharpening in moonèd horns
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
With ported spears, as thick as when a field
Of Ceres, ripe for harvest, waving bends
Her bearded grove of ears which way the wind
Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands,
Lest on the threshing-floor his hopeful sheaves
Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan, alarmed,
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved:
His stature reached the sky, and on his crest
Sat Horror plumed; nor wanted in his grasp
What seemed both shield and spear." — *P. L. IV.* 977+.

8. Nimrod is one of a group of the giants of fable, who surround the eighth circle, or "Malebolge." Antæus, a comrade of Nimrod, lifts Dante from this level to that of the ninth circle. Macaulay's rendering is a very accurate translation of the passage in the *Inferno*, XXXI. 58+.

15. Malebolge is divided into ten "Bolgia," or wards, in which are confined those sinners who are being punished for committing fraud in some of its various forms. In the last ward are confined forgers and liars. The description quoted by Macaulay is found in the *Inferno*, XXIX. 40+.

15. The passage in *Paradise Lost* here referred to (13, 14) describes a portion of a vision sent to Adam in which, after his fall but before his expulsion from Paradise, God reveals to him through the agency of the Angel Michael the physical and moral evils which his sin has entailed upon his descendants. It reads as follows:—

"Immediately a place
Before his eyes appear'd, sad, noisome, dark,
A lazar-house it seemed, wherein were laid
Numbers of all diseased; all maladies
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,
Demoniac frenzy, moping melancholy
And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,
Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.
Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch;
And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked
With vows, as their chief good and final hope." — *P. L. XI. 477+.*

24. 7. As Dante prepares to enter the sixth circle of Hell, his way is blocked by three Furies, or Gorgons, the aspect of one of whom, Medusa, is sufficiently terrible to turn him to stone. Before he catches sight of her, his guide, Virgil, warns him thus:—

"Turn thyself back, and keep fast closed thine eye,
For if the Gorgon come, and thou it see,
Thou ne'er again shalt reach the world on high.'
So spake my Guide, and with his own hands he
Turned me; nor was he with my hands content,
But with his own he helped to blindfold me."

Inferno, IX. 55 +. (Plumtre's Tr.)

9. In the fifth "Bolgia" of Malebolge dwell the souls of those guilty of bribery, suffering, in the midst of a lake of boiling pitch, the penalty of the crime of letting money stick to their fingers and defile them. Over them hover demons (Malebranche = Evil-claws, Barbariccia = Ugly-beard, Draghignazzo = Dragon-snout, etc.), who plunge them afresh beneath the pitch whenever their heads appear above the surface, by means of pronged fleshhooks. (*Inferno*, XXI.) Dante, in terror of the fiends, crouches behind a rock, and later escapes them only by plunging with Virgil into the next "Bolgia."

10. As before stated (note to p. 22, l. 15), Lucifer is plunged in ice in the lowest abyss of Hell, his waist being placed at the exact centre of the globe. Down his shaggy sides clambered Virgil, bearing Dante clinging to his neck, but not (as Macaulay says) grasping the sides of Lucifer with his own hands. Reversing his position at the waist of the monster, Virgil places Dante on a small ledge on *the other side* of the centre of the Earth, and they climb together, by a tortuous passage opposite to Hell, to the surface of the earth, where they find themselves at the base of the Mount of Purgatory in the midst of the unknown watery wastes of the western hemisphere, at a point opposite that at which they had entered Hell.

11. This mountain Dante now climbs, each stage of the ascent being signalized by the purifying away of some form of sin from his soul. Before he enters the first region of Purgatory, an angel inscribes seven times upon his brow (*Purgatorio*, IX. 112+) the letter P, once for each of the seven deadly sins (= peccata). After the first stage is passed, one of these is obliterated by an angel stationed at the entrance to the second stage (*Purgatorio*, XII. 97+, 118+), and a similar thing (we are led to infer) happens at each following stage.

27. 1. Macaulay here uses a series of symbolic expressions for the several forces that combined to resist the spread of Christianity at its inception. The *Synagogue* typifies, of course, the old Hebraic theology, with its prejudices against everything outside the tenets and rules of the organized priesthood. The *Academy* typifies the philosophy of Plato, who taught in a school called the "Academy" from 388 to 348 B.C. For centuries after his death, his name continued to command so much respect that in the year 316 A.D. a philosopher named Arcesilaus established what was called the "New Academy," and pretended to teach a philosophical system based upon the doctrines of Plato; but the underlying principle in his teachings was the Sceptical theory that every supposed fact of our lives is a matter of *doubt*. For many generations these doctrines contested with Christianity for the dominance of the minds of persons of speculative tendencies. The *Portico* was the site of the school of Zeno, founder of the sect of philosophers called Stoics.

These philosophers aimed to cultivate a lofty indifference to the ordinary pleasures of life, devoting their lives to the pursuit of true wisdom. The "Pride of the Portico" may be inferred from the following quotation: "'The wise man,' they said, 'knows everything because he possesses a perfect mind. . . . He alone is the true statesman, lawgiver, orator, educator, critic, poet, physician. The wise man is unerring and faultless. . . . He alone is a true companion, neighbor, kinsman, friend.'" *The fasces of the Lictor* typify the political power of the Roman state, which ranged its authority in opposition to the spread of Christianity; while *the swords of thirty legions* stand for the military arm of the same mighty state.

29. 18. Farinata was a heretic, and is therefore confined in one of the tombs of the sixth circle of Hell. The pen-portrait of him by Dante is celebrated for its power in depicting pride of spirit and a passion of partisanship untamable even by the tortures of the damned. He lives over again the strife that divided Italy into hostile camps in his lifetime, and has lost no portion of his scorn for the low born among the Florentines, and indeed for the entire populace of the city, because of its hostility to his own race.

26. When Dante has ascended the Mount of Purgatory, and has been purged of the seven deadly sins (see note on p. 24, l. 11), he meets Beatrice, the lady whose love has dominated nearly his whole life. She here typifies the Divine Wisdom which should have guided him on earth, but from which he had sometimes strayed into philosophical speculations, relying upon his own reason alone. Beatrice chides him for these lapses from constancy, using the language of a woman chiding an earthly lover. Macaulay wholly fails to give its due weight to the allegorical signification of the dialogue. It is found in the *Purgatorio*, Cantos XXX and XXXI.

31. 18. The references are mainly to the magnificent speech of Satan in *P. L. I.* 242-263, in which—finding himself plunged into a gloomy place of torture, where a soil of "marle," that "ever burns with solid (as the lake with liquid) fire," slopes toward a lake whose waves surge in billows "with floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire"—he proves his unconquerable courage by "vaunting aloud though racked with deep despair."

"'Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,'
Said then the lost Archangel, 'this the seat
That we must change for Heaven? this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is sovran can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme

Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
 Where joy forever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,
 Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,
 Receive thy new possessor — one who brings
 A mind not to be changed by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself
 Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
 What matter where, if I be still the same,
 And what I should be, all but less than he
 Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
 We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
 Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
 Here we may reign secure; and, in my choice,
 To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:
 Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.'"

Macaulay uses the phrases "the sword of Michael" and "the thunder of Jehovah" to strengthen his statement; but the truth is that Satan bore up against neither, but was temporarily disabled by the former, and driven from the battle writhing with pain, "gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame"; while from the latter he with his followers fled "like a timorous flock," "exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen." It was only after the thunder had ceased to "bellow through the vast and boundless deep" that he took fresh courage, as indicated above.

33. 6. Of the great leaders of the Rebellion, Cromwell, Eliot, and Hampden had been "taken away from the evil to come"; Sir Henry Vane had "poured forth his blood on the scaffold"; while, of the other regicides, Lambert with nineteen of his comrades had been imprisoned for life, and nineteen others "had carried into foreign climates their unconquerable hatred of oppression."

10. "The character of the drama became conformed to the character of its patrons. The comic poet was the mouthpiece of the most deeply corrupted part of a corrupted society. . . . The Puritan had affected formality; the comic poet laughed at decorum. The Puritan had frowned at innocent diversions; the comic poet took under his patronage the most flagitious excesses. 'The Puritan had canted; the comic poet blasphemed.' — MACAULAY, *The Comic Dramatists of the Restoration*.

17. The heroine of the *Comus* is induced by fraud to enter the palace of the vile wizard Comus, where she is held by enchantment in a chair, without the power of motion, while Comus endeavors by enticements and threats to induce her to drink of a potent liquor; but her purity of soul and serenity of spirit render her secure against

either temptation or intimidation. The significance of the scene in its application to Macaulay's theme may be gathered from the following excerpt:—

Comus. Nay, lady, sit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chained up in alabaster,
And you a statue, or as Daphne was,
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

Lady. Fool, do not boast;
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled while Heaven sees good.

Comus. Why are you vext, lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far. See, here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.
And first behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm and fragrant syrups mixed. . . .
This will restore all soon.

Lady. 'T will not, false traitor!
'T will not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banished from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage and the safe abode
Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,
These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
Hence with thy brewed enchantments, foul deceiver!

34. 4. When the tension between King and Parliament reached a critical stage, in 1639, Milton was travelling in Italy. He determined to cut short his period of foreign study and recreation, because (as he said) "I thought it base to be travelling for amusement abroad, while my fellow-citizens were fighting for liberty at home." Macaulay's picture of him at this stage of his life is not exaggerated, but it is not true that he later experienced "every calamity which is incident to our nature," or that he "retired to a hovel to die."

36. 13. At the time this essay was published (1825), the Greeks had been for four years engaged in a struggle to throw off the yoke of Turkish sovereignty, but they did not gain their independence until 1830. Thus, the period of Greek subjection to external powers, from its subjugation by the Macedonians, had been approximately two thousand years.

27. The fable, which is published in the miscellaneous collection of ancient apologues known as *Æsop's Fables*, is as follows:—

"A man and a lion travelled together through the forest. They soon began to boast of their respective superiority to each other in strength and prowess. As they were disputing they passed a statue, carved in stone, which represented a Lion strangled by a Man. The traveller pointed to it and said: 'See there! how strong we are and how we prevail over even the king of beasts.' The Lion replied: 'This statue was made by one of you men. If we Lions knew how to erect statues, you would see the man placed under the paw of the Lion.'"

38. 21. Laud believed in a church deriving its authority from St. Peter through the Episcopal succession, and attempted to enforce conformity to the ritual of the Church of England (in respect to the use of a specified clerical dress, of specified postures in worship, etc.), not only upon the churches throughout England, but also upon those of the entirely distinct kingdom of Scotland. In this attempt he did not scruple to make use of the arbitrary "Court of High Commission," a body execrated by Parliament and people for its illegal exercise of power.

39. 2. At the time this essay was written, Macaulay's sympathies were deeply enlisted in behalf of the struggle being waged by the Liberals in English politics, for the abolition of the legal restrictions regarding Catholics which had remained on the statute books from the days when fear of a Catholic tyranny had driven the nation to an extreme of anti-Catholic frenzy. He here departs from his main theme to attack the Conservatives in English politics, who resist any change in the political status of Catholics. He says that these persons, being Tories, deplore the Revolution of 1688 because of its violation of the doctrine of Divine Right, and of the principle of Legitimacy; but they applaud the laws against Catholics passed under the "usurper" William III., and strenuously resist any attempt to repeal them. Thus they "find in the great actions of former times only an excuse for existing abuses."

19. This sect was the Catholics, who were looked upon in 1689 as being ever ready to seize upon the first opportunity to restore the Stuarts to the throne, and thus fasten upon England a Catholic tyranny. Especially was this true of the Irish, who had never relaxed in their loyalty to the Stuarts, and who, consequently, were now crushed under the most severe laws.

27. In 1825 the rulers of Naples and of Spain held their thrones through the aid of the "Holy Alliance" of European Powers, headed by Austria, which was pledged to the support of absolute monarchs against democratic uprisings. In South America, the Spanish colonies had succeeded in throwing off the yoke of Spain, and the proposal that the

Holy Alliance should interfere to restore to the Spanish monarch his legitimate rights in America had met with favor at the hands of the English extreme Tories. Thus the doctrine of Divine Right, which had suffered transportation with the Stuarts, had come back "under the *alias* of Legitimacy."

40. 13. This reference has been almost universally explained by annotators as applying to Ferdinand of Aragon (1452-1516) and Frederick of the Palatinate (1596-1632); but they fail to show in what way these monarchs illustrate his point, which is that the Tories of 1825 uphold even tyrants on the ground of Legitimacy, no matter how extreme are their acts. Now, in 1825, two Catholic "Ferdinands" were ruling in Spain and Naples respectively, having been rejected by their oppressed subjects, and been restored by the Holy Alliance against which Macaulay has just been animadverting; while on the throne of Prussia was a Protestant "Frederick," who had joined the Holy Alliance in maintaining the principle of Legitimacy, and had balked his own people in their desire for a written constitution. Is it not more likely that these were the facts that lay in Macaulay's mind when he was writing the passage?

42. 25. This interesting and ingenious catalogue of evils presents an aspect of the "glorious Revolution" not often so frankly set forth. The "disputed succession" made the seats of the Hanoverian monarchs insecure for half a century; the earliest monarchs of that race understood neither the English language nor the English temper; the endeavor to preserve to the Hanoverians their continental possessions entangled England in twenty years of war; and these inevitably brought in their train a standing army and a national debt.

43. 28. The formula "*Le Roi le veut*," by which the King indorsed his assent upon the Bills enacted by Parliament, exhibits in the language in which it is expressed an interesting reminder of the days when the victorious Normans wrought into the fabric of English political and legal institutions their own forms and usages. The reference is to the contest over the Petition of Right (see p. xix.) to which Charles had attempted to give a modified assent (by altering the phrase usually appended by the monarch when granting petitions), so as to reserve his right to exercise his "prerogative," a right upon which the whole struggle centred. He finally signed the Petition with the usual formula for granting petitions, "*Soit droit fait comme il est désiré*," thus apparently relinquishing the claim to exercise his prerogative, and thereby "cozening" the Parliament; for he still adhered to it in practice. (Macaulay apparently fails to discriminate between the formula for *Bills* and that for *Petitions*.)

46. 4. It was to gain a grant of a subsidy from Parliament that Charles had made the concession stated in the preceding note.

47. 4. In the original draft published in 1825 this sentence ended with the words, "Crouch beneath the sceptres of Brandenburg and Braganza." Macaulay thus entered another protest against the doctrine of Absolutism (see note to p. 40, l. 13). But by the year 1849 (when the text was revised) political conditions in Europe had so changed that these names no longer stood for the tyranny of a master over his slaves.

49. 14. Macaulay is referring especially to the French Revolution, the memory of the horrors of that outrage on the name of Liberty being still fresh in the minds of many of his readers in 1825.

50. 27. The persons most active in securing the execution of Charles I., including Cromwell, Bradshaw, Ireton, etc., and, indeed, the entire 167 members of the "high court" which condemned him to death, are known to history as the "Regicides," a name given them by the Royalists in condemnation of their extra-legal act.

51. 25. On the landing of William of Orange at Torbay, James II. sent Colonel Churchill, afterward the Duke of Marlborough, to stay his march eastward; but Churchill went over with his troops to the side of William. Surrounded by traitors, James fled from London on December 11, 1688, toward the seacoast, but having been prevented by some fishermen from taking ship for France, he returned to London, and took up his residence at his palace of Whitehall. But William, in his character of "Protector of the Protestant liberties of England," continued to advance upon London, and sent imperative orders to James to leave London. James again fled on December 18, and this time obtained transportation to France. One of his daughters, Mary, was the wife of his nephew William, and his other daughter, Anne, who was a Protestant, cast her lot with the champion of that faith.

51. 27. Nov. 5, 1688, William of Orange landed at Torbay.

52. 1. Jan. 30, 1649, Charles II. was executed.

53. 10. The quotation is from Virgil's *Æneid*, X. 830. *Æneas*, having mortally wounded an opponent, consoles him with the thought that he has fallen by the hand of no mean foe, but by the "right hand of great *Æneas*."

58. 1. Charles II. having escaped his pursuers by hiding in an oak tree after the battle of Worcester, oak branches were used by the Jacobites as symbolic decorations on anniversaries associated with the fortunes of the Stuarts; calves' heads, on the other hand, were served at the annual banquet of the Calves' Head Club (anti-Jacobin), so garnished as to symbolize the follies and outrages perpetrated by Charles I.

25. The principal "laugher" was Dr. Samuel Butler; author of a satirical poem, *Hudibras*, which set forth the ridiculous aspects of Puritanism in a masterly manner. The introduction of this poem should be consulted for its ludicrous treatment of every topic mentioned in Macaulay's list.

59. 6. The application of this quotation may be made most clearly apparent by the following somewhat free rendering: "This is the source of laughter, and likewise the stream which bears within itself dire perils: here especially should we curb our inclination, and be careful."

61. 18. This sentence refers to the wonders attending the death of Christ, as depicted in Matthew xxvii. 51-53, and Luke xxiii. 44, 45.

61. 30. The "millennial year" was a phrase employed by the Fifth-monarchy Men (see Index) to express the age, of indefinite length, during which the anticipated reign of Christ upon earth would endure.

66. 26. When Ulysses visited Circe to gain certain directions for his journey to the under-world, he was provided by Hermes with an herb which destroyed the potency of the enchanted cup with which she endeavored to overcome him and change him to a beast.

67. 4. The passage referred to is as follows:—

"But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high embowèd roof,
With antique pillars massy-proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow
To the full-voiced choir below,
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies
And bring all heaven before mine eyes."

Il Penseroso, 155+.

68. 1. The quotation expresses the plight of the brothers of the lady in *Comus*, when they have driven away the wizard, but find their sister still motionless in the chair (see note on p. 33, l. 17).

27. The reference is to Milton's Sonnet XVI. (Milton's *Minor Poems*; Heath).

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

"Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed. . . .

And on the back of crownèd Fortune proud
 Hast reared God's trophies and his work pursued,
 While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots imbrued,
 And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
 And Worcester's laureate wreath: yet much remains
 To conquer still; Peace hath her victories
 No less renowned than War: new foes arise,
 Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.
 Help us to save free conscience from the paw
 Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw."

69. 2. The reference is to Milton's *Areopagitica, or a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing*, published in 1644, and reckoned among the noblest of his prose works.

70. 5. The quotation is from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, II. 72+. The deity of the sun, describing his daily journey through the sky, says (in effect):—

"I have a severe struggle (*i.e.* to hold my own against the sweep of the heavenly bodies in their courses), yet the force that controls the other bodies does not overmaster me, and I make my way in my chariot in a direction contrary to the swift revolution of the celestial sphere."

71. 26. Milton's blindness, in his later years, compelled him to have recourse to readers and to amanuenses; but there would have been no "contest" with his daughters had Macaulay been "transported a hundred years back"; for it will be remembered that Milton's daughters showed so plainly their revolt from the drudgery of their task of "reading and exactly pronouncing the language of whatever book he thought fit to peruse, viz. the Hebrew (and I think the Syriac), the Latin, the Italian, Spanish, and French,"¹ that Milton was led practically to disinherit them in his will, as undutiful children.

72. 20. The Virgin Martyr, Dorothea, is put to death by a persecutor of the Christians, and having ascended to Paradise, she sends an angelic messenger to her persecutor, bearing a basket of heavenly fruit and flowers. The celestial odor and flavor of the gift prove their divine origin, and the persecutor is converted to Christianity by the miracle, and suffers martyrdom in his turn at the order of the Emperor Diocletian.

¹ Edward Philips, nephew of Milton.

NOTES, CRITICAL AND SUGGESTIVE.

IN the earlier portion of these notes especial attention is paid to the element of *structure*, while in the later portion the notes are limited to suggestions in regard to *general literary features*, in the expectation that by the time the pupil has reached this part of the essay he will have gained sufficient training to enable him to observe for himself the structural features of the work.

I. Introduction.

¶¶ 1-7. *The Occasion of the Essay.*

Observe the opening sentence of each of the seven paragraphs. The first (p. 1, ll. 1-4) announces the subject of Part I. of the essay, although it piques the curiosity of the reader by not definitely connecting the newly discovered manuscript with the title of the essay until a few sentences later. Observe that the first sentence is periodic; *i.e.* the closing words are the vital ones, containing the specific subject of thought. Note that this is especially the subject of page 1.

Do the opening sentences of the others perform a similar function for their respective portions? Then how may a reader train himself to retain the chief contents of a well-written article, and how review it most profitably?

2. 10-16. Observe the care with which Macaulay's *general* assertion in regard to the excellence of Mr. Sumner's work is verified by these *specific* statements (l. 23). Test the suggestiveness of the epithet "academic" as applied to the Pharisees in literature, by consulting the *Index* under *Academy* (l. 28). Note the felicity of touch in using a phrase of literary criticism from Milton's own pen to adorn a passage dealing with Milton's style.

3. 8-11. Be careful to observe, as you read further, whether the qualities here attributed to Milton are those upon which Macaulay lays stress in the body of his essay, and, therefore, whether this statement is designedly preparatory to what follows, or merely casual (l. 30). Is there an important difference in the meaning of *converted* and *perverted* as applied to changes of religious belief? How does the distinction here implied emphasize the contrast of *orthodox* and *heretical* in lines 27 and 28? Note the suggestion in the word *quartos* of the days when ponderous controversial works abounded.

4. 10-26. This paragraph affords good illustrations of the use of an ascending series, or climax, and of anticipatory suggestion. The *relics* (l. 15 +) rise in dignity from an external reminder to a vital element; the memorable aspects of Milton's life and character (l. 24 +) rise, especially in the manner of presentation, from the commonplace (because inevitable) ascription of "genius" to the sounding title of "champion and martyr of English liberty," a title appealing with special force in the year 1825 to the heart of that English party to which Macaulay adhered. Furthermore, the titles here rehearsed indicate the several aspects in which Milton is to be viewed in this essay, and the general order in which they will be treated. Is the illustration from the Capuchins (l. 12) suggestive? That is, do the phrases *life and miracles of a saint, drops of his blood*, and *devotional feelings* apply, if only remotely, to Milton, to the *De Doctrina Christiana*, and to the readers of this essay, respectively?

Note that these seven paragraphs constitute the entire book review which Macaulay is professedly writing, and that the volume reviewed is not again referred to until the essay is practically completed. (Where is it again mentioned?) This shadowy pretence of reviewing a book (the hollowness of which is admitted in paragraph 7) is characteristic of Macaulay.

II. The Essay Proper. A Study of Milton's Career.

A. MILTON'S POETICAL WORK.

¶¶ 8-9. *The Grounds of his Fame.*

5. 27. Here begins the body of the essay, which treats first of Milton's poetic work (¶¶ 8 to 49) and then of his political career (¶¶ 50 to 89). The first subdivision of this portion devoted to his poetry is a preliminary discussion, forming Macaulay's contribution to the *theory of the poetic art*. He enunciates and attempts to demonstrate two main theses, one in paragraph 10 on the *genesis of the poetic gift*, the other in paragraph 17 on the *operation of the poetic faculty*. Then he applies these abstract propositions to the specific case of Milton. Has Macaulay, in paragraph 8, set up a man of straw for his own purposes? *I.e.* have critics decried Milton's original powers to the extent which Macaulay would imply (p. 5, ll. 2-17)? And would he deliberately maintain that the age of Pope, or his own age, offered to the poet more favorable circumstances than that of Milton (ll. 18-21)? Observe how the punctuation of the sentences in lines 3 to 17 breaks them into choppy portions. Can they be reconstructed so as to flow more smoothly, without losing force? Observe, (1) in the first sentence of paragraph 9, an example of Macaulay's habit of making extreme assertions to compel attention, and of allowing the particular case before him at any given time to seem

unique and quite beyond ordinary experience; (2) in lines 24, 25, his skill in suggesting by the phrases *the poet . . . the critic* the difference in native temper of mind that makes it clear why Milton and Johnson should adopt the different opinions expressed in the preceding sentences; (3) the forceful construction of this sentence, with its antithetical words in the most emphatic positions, and as far apart as possible; and (4) the impressive effect of the ample closing sentence (ll. 26-30), following upon three short ones and ending with its balanced pairs, *He knew . . . and he looked back; from the civilization which . . . or from the learning which; of simple words . . . and vivid impressions.*

¶¶ 10-20. *Philosophical Digression from the Main Theme.*

6. 1-13. This paragraph is devoted to expounding a theorem regarding *opposite changes*; note how the effect of a balance or *opposition* of parts is maintained through the successive sentences. Where in this paragraph is there another of Macaulay's extreme statements? By what epithet does he attempt to cast ridicule upon those who do not accept his theory (ll. 14-30)? Here two of Macaulay's characteristics are exemplified; first, his copiousness and vigor of expression enforcing an assertion; and secondly, his habit of attributing to "every schoolboy" (or girl) and to every "intelligent man" almost encyclopædic knowledge, in the endeavor to make his statements impressive. Consider, for example, the work of Halifax in creating the Bank of England, and the scope of his knowledge of financial conditions in their relations to public and private enterprises, and judge whether the principles and facts which determined his action were all set forth within the pages of "Mrs. Marcet's little dialogues."

7. 4+. In paragraphs 12 and 13, Macaulay characteristically takes one particular tool of the poet, the *specific expression*, and exalts it to the temporary exclusion of all other considerations. In his argument he assumes that poetry is poetry *solely* as it is constituted of a series of successive *particular images* (ll. 21-22), either embodied in single words or in expressions conceived as units. But it might be maintained with equal success that the greatest poetry is that which contains the most numerous generalizations; that in Shakespeare's work, for example, the portions that live most freshly in men's minds are the generalizations, and these, too, expressed wholly in abstract terms. Furthermore, could Iago (p. 8, l. 12) have been created had not Shakespeare conceived him, not merely as an individual, but also as a type? And is it not because every one of the dramatist's notable characters is the embodiment of a class and not a particular individual only, that he continues to interest successive generations of readers? And again, is it not true that the *variety* of images which each age offers to the poet for his use is greater than that offered by any previous age? [It is worth while for the pupil to form the habit

of scrutinizing each of Macaulay's principal assertions of theory somewhat in the foregoing manner, because the training which enables a man to discover and lay bare the *sophistry* or the *inadequacy* of a brilliant, but inexact "pronunciamento" like those of Macaulay is most valuable in all phases of life. He should learn first instinctively to question the *truth of the imagery* which perhaps distorts the fact: "Is language the *machine* of the poet (p. 7, l. 10+) or is it the *material* to be shaped with the aid of the machine, or both?" Secondly, he should question the *truth of the fact* itself: "If words be the machines, or tools, of the poet, is it possible to conceive of a machine that is *best fitted for its purpose in its rudest state*" (l. 11)? [This process will inevitably lead to clearer thinking.]

In the statement beginning on line 22, are both the positive and the negative assertions equally true, or do men besides *classifying more universally*, also *scrutinize more accurately the individuals* of each class? Can men classify objects at all without examining particular objects?

8. 16-19. This sentence practically asserts that the operation of one of the primary faculties of the mind is a mark of the unsoundness of that mind. Test this statement in the manner suggested above. Is the definition of poetry beginning in line 23 adequate to cover all the poems in a standard course in literature?

9. 7, 8. Note the epigrammatic character of the sentence. Is the word "credulity" (l. 11) properly used? If "imagination" were substituted for it, what would be the effect on the argument? Does the illustration (l. 17+) legitimately enforce his point? That is, if the reader of Hamlet could be "credulous" enough to be affected by it as the child is affected by the tale of Red Riding-hood, would he be more keenly feeling or appreciating the *poetry* of the drama? In line 12, where should the word "almost" be placed? In paragraph 16, Macaulay continues his confusion of the poetic *imagination* with the poetic *temperament*. The former is one element that goes to make up the latter, but so also are æsthetic sensitiveness to rhythm and to physical beauty, and (though this has been disputed) sensitiveness to ideals of truth and virtue. The paragraph is well constructed, beginning with a general statement, enforcing this by repetition in specific forms, and ending with an echo of the same idea, as a summary. It may be questioned whether the effects he describes were produced upon the early Greeks, the Mohawks, and the Welsh bards by the poetry *as poetry*.

10. 19. He now formally propounds the thesis already indirectly announced, developing his theory of the decline of poetic inspiration with advancing civilization. Is his illustration sound, *as a basis for argument*? Granting that the poem and the lantern alike produce an illusion; does the dark room stand in the *same relation* to the illusion on the eye that the dark *ages* sustain to the mental illusion (l. 31)?

Note the epigrammatic form of the opening sentence of paragraph 18, and the exuberance of expression with which it is amplified. The closing reference (p. 11, ll. 11-16) might well be applied to Wordsworth, who failed, in certain portions of his work, simply *because* he endeavored to "become a little child" (l. 1). In paragraph 19 Macaulay returns from his digression, to apply its central theory to Milton. The return is clearly indicated in the opening sentence, but the application is weak. He rehearses Milton's attainments in the lines of classical culture, but fails to show that the poet found them to be "difficulties" in his particular work, or how he "triumphed" over them, — being led astray by his desire to refute another of Johnson's critical judgments. The simile in which he disposes of Johnson's claim to be a critic of classical Latin is characteristic of Macaulay in its vigor and its appositeness.

12. 6+. This paragraph deserves study for the splendor of its adornment, which grows richer as the paragraph proceeds. Note how effective is this burst of eloquence, introduced at the end of a dissertation for the purpose of inducing the reader to accept the writer's theory by causing him to lose, temporarily, the critical attitude in the warmth of the admiration thus evoked.

¶¶ 21-49. *A Critique of Milton's Poetry.*

13. 8. Having exalted the reader's opinion of Milton by showing him to be great in *spite* of circumstances, Macaulay now proceeds to a critical examination of Milton's poetical works, first considering the qualities common to all, and then proceeding to the individual poems, in the general order of their production. Paragraph 21 serves to create expectation by exalting the merits of the works to be considered, yet disarms criticism by the modesty of the claims advanced for the writer. Note how the sentence beginning in line 9, by its length, its harmonious balance of parts, its use of climax, dignifies the subject of which it treats, and how the succeeding ones sink into insignificance, in harmony with the thought. Macaulay's main assertion in paragraph 22 is profoundly true; and the failure of the untrained reader to "fill up the outlines" sketched by Milton (p. 14, l. 7) is accountable for his limited enjoyment of the great poet's work. To illustrate: The poet describes the arch-fiend Satan as moving toward the shore of the lake in Hell, dimly visible through the dusky atmosphere, —

. . . "his ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast. The broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening, from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe." — *P. L.* I. 284 +.

Now, if the reader's mind be coöperating actively with the poet, instead of playing the part of "a mere passive listener" (p. 14, l. 6), every touch in this description will convey remote suggestions to him. The expression "ethereal temper" will suggest that the shield (like all substances made of the fiery essence, or ether) would glow with a radiance of its own, so as to be visible in the gloom of Hell at some distance. But, like all heavenly substances (including that of which Satan's body was made), its glory had been dimmed by the base uses to which it had been put, and every blow received in the recent combat with God's forces had left in it an ineffaceable dint or scar. This the poet whispers to those who have ears to hear, in his references to the moon's "spotty globe," seen "at evening" when its pure golden light is changed to a coppery, sullen red by atmospheric conditions at its rising. And, too, the *size* of the shield is magnified for those who have the eyes of poetic imagination to look at it through the "optic glass" of the "Tuscan artist"; while Satan's mighty frame, the grandeur of which is often impressed upon the reader of the poem, is here expanded to the bulk of the mountain that, like Satan's shoulders, hides a portion of the brilliant orb from the observer in the vale of the Arno. Such examples of suggestions might be culled indefinitely from Milton's poems.

Thus Macaulay's main assertion about Milton's characteristics as a poet appears to be well founded; but observe how his love of forceful expression leads him to make an absolutely absurd hyperbole in the sentence on p. 14, ll. 8, 9.

14. 10+. Paragraphs 23 and 24 furnish examples of Macaulay's richness of diction and copiousness of expression. Every device of the skilful writer — repetition, enlargement, alteration of the point of view, change from the abstract to the concrete, illustration, suggestion, and poetic imagery — is employed within the limits of these two paragraphs. In the closing sentence of paragraph 24, Macaulay was clearly endeavoring to create the same spell by suggestive "muster rolls" of objects endeared to the reader, that he attributes to Milton's lists of names (ll. 21-23). As usual the two minor poems are held to exhibit in a superlative degree the qualities under consideration. It is interesting to see Macaulay claiming for the "mechanism of language" in these (thoroughly polished and civilized) poems an effectiveness which he has asserted is possible to a language only in its ruder states. And it is also interesting to note his attempts to make his exaggeration pass unquestioned by dazzling the mind with an epigram at the end of the paragraph (p. 16, ll. 1, 2).

16. 3+. The discussion in paragraphs 26-28 is of a nature too technical to convey a clear and lasting impression to the mind of a pupil unacquainted with the classic drama, and there being so much material of greater value to be treated, it may be passed over without intensive study.

It is sufficient for the pupil to note its central dictum, that the *Samson*, in attempting to combine dramatic and lyric elements, loses the unity of impression that would make it either a successful drama or a successful ode, and that Milton was led into this error by following a faulty model, Euripides. Technically the whole passage lacks smoothness of transition between its parts, and clearness and directness in its demonstration.

19. 54 +. The superlative is again invoked for the *Comus*, both in the opening sentence of the general criticism (ll. 7, 8), and in the closing metaphor (ll. 23-26). But it is not true that the work is flawless, except on the condition implied in the statement that it is "essentially lyrical, and dramatic only in semblance" (ll. 28-30). The speeches are in no way differentiated from the different characters, and (in view of the fact that the *Comus* was written for presentation on the stage) it may be questioned whether this lack of character painting and the excessive length of the speeches do not constitute blemishes in the workmanship of the author. In p. 20, ll. 19-29, Macaulay again resorts to the device of drawing his illustration from the author under discussion, and here he ingeniously relies upon that author for the very phrases which enrich his language.

21. 1-17. A transition paragraph, linking back with its first sentence to the class of poems already examined (Macaulay should say "several more" or "several others among" the minor poems), and forward with its closing sentence to the masterpiece next to be discussed. His exaltation of the *Paradise Regained*, as being superior "to every poem which has since made its appearance," would carry more conviction had it been supported by some examination of the work of Dryden, Pope, Gray, Burns, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Campbell, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, all of whom had produced notable works before the date of this essay. For it is to be noted that Macaulay does not qualify his statement by limiting the comparative estimate to poems of the same class or the same length, and one is led to speculate as to what may be the *standard of judgment* which he here applies. In lines 18 and 19 the critic again fails to qualify his statement sufficiently for accuracy. From the last sentence of the preceding paragraph we are led to suppose that this opening sentence is intended to exalt the *poetic genius* of Milton above that of all modern writers except Dante. Using the expression "can be compared" in its full scope, Macaulay tacitly implies that in native powers, in excellence of workmanship, in profundity of thought, in weight of subject, and in influence upon the world's thought and expression, the authors of the two works mentioned are unapproached. But Shakespeare exhibited as great poetic gifts, although he did not employ them in the composition of an epic; Spenser's epic, *The Faerie Queene*, although unfinished, has moulded the expression of all succeeding English poets; and Goethe's *Faust*, the first part of which was published in 1808, has given him a right to dispute precedence with either Dante or Milton.

Is the expression "the subject of Milton" (l. 20) felicitously phrased? Is the sentence (ll. 21-23) clearly expressed? Is the word "illustrate" (l. 23) well chosen? Is the phrase "father of Tuscan literature" (employed to avoid repeating the name *Dante*) well chosen to suggest the greatness of Dante's work? That is, did his fame rest in any marked degree on his being the *first* writer to employ the *Italian tongue* for poetic composition with marked success? In lines 25-28, the illustration employed hardly lends clearness, because of its recondite character. Even readers of considerable culture and wide information may be excused for not knowing that in the Mexican scheme of picture-writing the representation of an eagle (for example) really stands for an eagle, whereas in the Egyptian hieroglyphic writing it is merely a symbol to indicate the letter *a*. Furthermore, the application of the illustration is confused by a reversal of the order of ideas. The hieroglyphic, or *abstract symbol*, is mentioned first in the simile proper; but in its application, Dante, who employs concrete representation by *images*, is placed first.

22. The punctuation of the sentence in lines 7 to 13 is not satisfactory according to modern standards. In lines 16 to 20, the illustrations are not introduced in such a manner as to show their function and bearing. Taken altogether this is a somewhat carelessly constructed paragraph.

24. 3-12. An example of parallel construction. Does it illustrate climax? Note the typical character of the three references in lines 9-11.

25. 3+. A transitional paragraph intended to prepare the way for the discussion of the original theory propounded by Macaulay in lines 16-31. Observe the length of the sentences. The object of the writer is to impress upon the reader, by a *series* of sharp and, therefore, brief statements, the impossibility of expressing adequately man's ideas of the supernatural.

26. 1+. Observe the imperfect connection with the previous paragraph, and the failure to indicate the subject of this. Note the chronological succession in the schools of religious thought here mentioned, producing climax by a final reference (ll. 25-28) to the Christian faith, which would appeal to the sympathies of his hearers (ll. 29-31). Note the force given by the definite words, *synagogue*, *portico*, and *liclor* in place of more general terms. This paragraph would seem too long for a mere digression, designed to illustrate one phase of the truth Macaulay is attempting to prove.

27. 18-20. An example of Macaulay's commonest fault (l. 21)? A well-constructed paragraph; the sentence, however, is incorrectly punctuated. Trace throughout the paragraph the constant use of antithesis in single sentences, and in pairs of sentences.

28. 31+. Macaulay here adduces proof from specific classes of facts

in the work of the two poets, but the opening sentence fails to indicate what topic is to be treated in this paragraph. Macaulay also is tempted to detract from the excellence of Dante's work in order to exalt that of Milton in the succeeding paragraph.

30. 8+. Observe how in this paragraph the language rises in dignity to harmonize with the character of the work of Æschylus which is being described. Notice how the movement is made rhythmic by the pairs of nouns and adjectives: *amenity and elegance, Goddess of light and goddess of desire, huge and grotesque labyrinths*, etc. Note the climax in the closing sentence, which by its length, by its diction (largely borrowed by Milton), and by the order of expression, keeps the attention unrelaxed until its closing phrase.

31. 19+. A paragraph wholly untrue to fact. Let the pupil trace in the works of Milton the references to his own personal experiences, and especially to his religious beliefs and sympathies.

32. 1+. The opening sentence is misleading as to the character of the paragraph. Recast it so as to avoid indicating that Milton's character is to be treated therein. (l. 27.) A statement thoroughly misleading; there is no evidence that Milton ever had any experience as a lover in any way kin to Dante's. He married "in haste to repent at leisure." And the assertion in p. 33, l. 20+, is wholly false. Macaulay is led into this misstatement by his love for contrast, and the same desire for rhetorical effects leads to the exaggeration in the closing sentence of the paragraph.

34. 5-9. At what age did Milton write the *Paradise Lost*? Is it true that at that age images of beauty and tenderness are beginning to fade (l. 19+)? Is the simile suggestive and closely applicable as well as beautiful and forceful (l. 24+)? This tribute to the merit of the sonnets is well deserved. They should be studied carefully by every student of Milton.

35. 27. The conclusion of the first part of the essay, devoted to Milton's work as a literary man.

B. MILTON'S POLITICAL CAREER.

¶¶ 50-72. *Preliminary Study of the Great Rebellion.*

36. 1+. This opening sentence forms an artificial transition from Milton's poetical work to his political career. The paragraph is intended to create expectancy by dignifying the subject now to be treated, and by so presenting it as to appeal to the sympathies of the English readers of Macaulay's day (l. 5). Note how the words *Oromasdes* and *Arimanes*, by their impressive sound and unfamiliar aspect, increase the literary effect of the sentence, and how the scriptural language in lines 16 and 17 continues this effect (l. 18). This paragraph, in contrast with the pre-

ceding one, aims to belittle the work of other critics of the period, and thus prepare the way for the favorable reception of Macaulay's judgments upon men and events.

37. 22+. The first sentence announces a digression upon the question of whether the Great Rebellion was justified by the acts of Charles Stuart, a digression which is protracted for twenty-one paragraphs. The assertion, then, that "in the answer to this question is involved one's judgment of the public conduct of Milton" should be weighed with great care (l. 31). Note the shrewd assumption that the writer does not need all his arguments to prove his case.

38. 7+. To what body of English politicians does Macaulay appeal in the argument thus introduced (ll. 17-21). These superlatives, although characteristic, are here perhaps intended to forestall charges that Macaulay was in sympathy with Catholicism, a charge to which the following three paragraphs might give color (l. 25+). This and the following paragraph are wholly out of place, being merely an attack upon Macaulay's opponents in the pending struggle in regard to Catholic emancipation. They exhibit bad taste, exaggeration, and intemperate passion, together with that obscurity of expression which naturally accompanies lack of restraint.

40. 20-23. A characteristic Macaulayan exaggeration.

41. 1+. Macaulay's favorite device of antithesis (ll. 3-6). A misrepresentation of facts. The vital assertion in the Declaration was that James had "abdicated the throne" (ll. 6-9). A misleading statement of the question at issue. The question is not whether resistance is justified, but to what lengths that resistance may go.

41. 12+. This paragraph exhibits faulty argumentation, professing to prove from the *admissions of Charles* his breach of the *fundamental laws* of the kingdom. It quotes the *testimony of historians* to prove his acts to have been *oppressive*, and to have violated the *Declaration of Right*. It would have been far more effective to refer to Magna Charta rather than to a document formulated after Charles's death.

42. 8+. An effectively constructed paragraph. After presenting the cause of Charles in a series of terse sentences, Macaulay moves forward to a scathing denunciation of his faults, ending in a sentence which proceeds to an effective climax.

43. 7+. Having apparently fully demonstrated the truth of his assertion, Macaulay artfully adduces apparently superfluous arguments with the effect of strengthening the conviction of the reader. To prove that Charles was even worse than James, he abandons general charges and quotes a specific instance of his treachery. This instance he presents in a picture drawn in the present tense to make it more vivid (l. 20). This sentence is skilfully constructed to sum up the faults of which Charles had been charged, and creates an anticipation of the inference

to be drawn in concluding the argument; and the entire paragraph merely recapitulates in briefest form the points on which Macaulay relies to secure conviction.

44. 9+. This and the following paragraph illustrate Macaulay's extraordinary power of sarcasm, and Macaulay, as usual, has recourse to the device of antithesis. The pupil should test for himself whether the two halves of the antithesis fairly present the respective positions of the advocates and the defenders of Charles, or whether they have rhetorical value only.

45+. Paragraphs 63, 64, 65 appear to be purposely written in a simple, quiet style, in order to form a suitable transition from the denunciation of Charles to the ridicule of the Puritan excesses in paragraph 66.

46. 30. This assumption of the insignificance of the excesses is rhetorically effective, but it is mere artifice; else Macaulay would not devote four paragraphs to explaining away or condoning those excesses.

47. 11+. Perhaps no portion of the essay contains more ingenious argument than this, on the relation of popular excesses to the character of the government amid which they sprang up; but while Macaulay's position may be true in the abstract, it is doubtful whether the excesses of the Puritans were not in part due to extraordinary causes entirely apart from the tyranny of the Stuarts.

48. 5+. The numerous figures in this paragraph and the two following illustrate the excessive ornamentation which Macaulay himself condemned.

¶¶ 73-89. *Milton's Attitude toward Questions and Parties.*

50. 11+. Macaulay, having defended the Rebellion on general principles, now returns to the discussion of Milton's relation to it, and relies perhaps too much upon the argument from analogy with the glorious Revolution of 1688 which has already been used to excess.

51. 1-10. The use of question and answer is but a disguised form of Macaulay's favorite device of antithetical contrasts (ll. 17-25). A finely constructed periodic sentence, but a very misleading one. While every detail may be verified, almost every one is so stated as to misrepresent the issue.

52. 3+. This paragraph exemplifies Macaulay's love of producing sensational effect by defending a paradox. When we consider the restrictions put upon the monarch at the restoration of Charles II., and the determination of the English people not to part with the liberty bought by the struggle against his father, which was demonstrated by the Revolution of 1688, it would seem a difficult task to demonstrate that the "Great Rebellion" was most injurious to the cause of *freedom*. Macaulay's position in the next paragraph is equally untenable. Any blame which the Regicides deserved, Milton should have shared.

55. 24-27. In praising the institutions established by Cromwell, Macaulay presents all their admirable features, but ignores the religious tyranny from which they were as inseparable as was the Stuart government from its own form of religious tyranny.

56. 5-8. Are these events a vindication of the Cromwell régime, or are they a proof that the institutions then created were wholly faulty (l. 18+)? Perhaps the most celebrated paragraph in the essay, from the splendid figurative richness of the expression, which increases in intensity and bitterness of denunciation to a perfect climax. It exhibits Macaulay's rhetorical powers at their best, but his critical judgment at its poorest.

57. 9+. A transitional paragraph, intended to introduce a digression upon political parties, which will offer Macaulay an opportunity to exhibit his great powers of character painting (ll. 26-30). An illustration of the force to be gained by specific instead of general expressions.

58. 5. The portion of the essay from paragraphs 80 to 85 is justly celebrated for its graphic delineation of the character of the Puritans. It is not marked by excessive insistence upon purely picturesque traits, but is a serious, impartial presentation of their character. It should be made a subject of minute analysis by the pupil, as an object lesson in orderly *structural arrangement*, in the progressive, uplifting, and *ennobling of the subject* treated, and in the art of *graphic presentation* by generalization, by the use of specific details, by judicious illustration, and especially by suggestion conveyed through language capable of calling up associated ideas in the mind.

65. 20+. This character study of Milton from paragraphs 87 to 90 is far more judiciously conceived, contains a far more searching analysis of his nature, is a far nobler, and a far truer portrait, than that in paragraphs 44 to 48. From it the pupil may gain not only information about Milton, but nobler ideals of life and of service. Especially valuable in a democratic state is a clear perception by people of all classes of the truth conveyed in paragraph 77, that the finest æsthetic emotions of human nature are among the precious possessions of mankind, but only when these emotions are its servants, not its master (p. 66, ll. 18-20).

67. 18-28. Again Macaulay utilizes his essay to champion the doctrine of human freedom for which he was to battle in Parliament throughout his life. This plea for the "freedom of the human mind" and the "unfettered exercise of private judgment" is in reality a plea for Catholic emancipation, and for those liberal reforms which have marked English legislation in this century.

C. MILTON'S PROSE WORKS (¶¶ 90-92).

69. 7+. Leaving abstract discussion, Macaulay again assumes the character of a literary critic, this paragraph effecting the transition from one line of thought to the other. Macaulay's praise of the prose work is,

perhaps, not extreme, but the style in which they are written is so far from that prevailing at present, that the taste of modern readers rejects even what their judgment approves, and these works are read by few except students.

III. Conclusion.

¶¶ 93-94. *The Sentiments evoked by the Foregoing Study.*

71. 1+. These concluding paragraphs are marred by a too apparent striving for effect. In attempting to invest Milton with a pathetic and tender interest, Macaulay skirts, if he does not cross, the line that parts the sublime from the ridiculous. The aged poet is, indeed, a noble and appealing figure, but the phrase *quick twinkle of his eyes* does not suggest the sentiment appropriate to the contemplation of his blindness; the silence is too breathless; the suggestion of the visitor weeping upon his hand is one of bathos not of pathos; and in the closing sentence, where climax should appear, the distortion of facts in representing his daughters as contesting for the privilege of reading to him creates only an impression of the falseness of the emotion expressed in the whole paragraph.

71. 27+. Let the pupil determine critically whether the last paragraph adds anything of value to the essay; whether the second sentence does not end in an absurd and superfluous assertion; whether the imagery in lines 5-11 and 14-20 (p. 72) is dignified or forceful throughout, and whether the closing sentence, lines 19-30, adequately recapitulates the qualities on which Macaulay has laid emphasis throughout the essay.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

On Macaulay's Workmanship. — In what different senses is the title "Essay" used? (p. ix.) Describe the type of essay exemplified in Macaulay's writings. (p. x.) What three elements in a literary composition should a reader train himself habitually to observe? (p. xi+.) Which of these would be of most obvious importance in a poetical work? Does Macaulay lay stress upon this in his criticism of Milton's and Dante's poetry? Which would probably be of paramount importance in a prose work like the essay on Milton? Is Macaulay's work ornate or severe in style? Is it clear or obscure? Are the illustrations abundant and varied, or scanty? Is his critical attitude judicial or partisan? Give some examples of Macaulay's use of hyperbole; of his use of specific and concrete expressions instead of general and abstract ones.

What is the characteristic feature of Macaulay's critical method, as exemplified in this essay? (*i.e.* How does he measure, or estimate Milton's literary work and his political achievements, the culpability of Charles I., etc?) What equipment does this method presuppose in the reader? Mention some cases where Macaulay colors or misrepresents history in order to carry his point with the reader.

Is this essay symmetrical or irregular in structure? Into how many main divisions does it fall, and with what subject does each deal? Is a suitable proportion of the whole work assigned to each division? Are the transitions, principal and secondary, clearly indicated? Are the digressions from the main theme duly subordinated to it, or do they unpleasantly interrupt its orderly development? Are any portions of the essay evidently inserted to display the writer's learning? Or his originality and ingenuity? Or his eloquence? Which topic, Milton's poetic works or Milton's political career, had been the more fully and satisfactorily treated by writers earlier than Macaulay? Had Macaulay any logical reason for the order in which he treated these subjects, either in their intrinsic importance, or in the amount of space which he intended to devote to each? What advantage is gained by treating the personal phase of his subject at the close of the essay? (*i.e.* What quality can be appropriately imparted to the style, which will thereby render the closing passages more effective?)

Indicate the portions of the essay in which Macaulay employs the device of stating his opponents' arguments in order to demolish them (53+); the portions in which he relies upon invective and sarcasm (54, 55, 62, 78); the portions in which he relies on brilliancy of rhetoric (82, 83).

On Macaulay's Critical Judgments.—State the character and history of the manuscript, the discovery of which was the occasion of this essay; why, in Macaulay's opinion, are its contents of slight interest to persons already familiar with Milton's life? (5, 8.) What does Macaulay hold to be the chief characteristics of Milton's poetic art, (*a*) in its effect upon the reader? (*b*) In its betrayal of the individuality of the poet? (*c*) In its style? (28–30.) In its mechanism? (33.)

Summarize Macaulay's estimate of *Paradise Lost* (32); of *Paradise Regained* (31); of *Comus* (29, 30); of *Samson Agonistes* (28); of Milton's Prose Works (3, 91, 92). Why are not the latter more popular?

What resemblance and what differences does Macaulay point out in the characters and circumstances of Milton and Dante? (44–46.) How far have we reason to think that these are warranted? What four points of difference does he indicate in the workmanship of the two men? (33, 34, 36, 37.) What features does he find common to

their work and that of Æschylus? (43.) Why does *The Divine Comedy* lend itself more favorably than Æschylus' dramas to Macaulay's comparative study? (*i.e.* What elements in the subject, the treatment, and the authorship of *The Divine Comedy* lead Macaulay to choose it as a standard of comparison for the *Paradise Lost*?) To which author does he award the supremacy in each of the matters discussed? From which of the three divisions of *The Divine Comedy* does Macaulay draw most of his comparisons, and why?

State in scientific form Macaulay's theory of the relation between progress in civilization and the development of scientific powers (11); of the poetic faculty (10). What arguments does he adduce, drawn from the mental operations requisite to the exercise of each kind of power? (12, 13.) What arguments drawn from the diverse effects of a highly developed civilization upon each class of mental operations? (15, 16.) How does he apply his generalization to Milton? (19.) If we accept his demonstration, how is our estimate of Milton's genius affected thereby?

What does Macaulay consider to be a necessary agency in the communication of ideas of the supernatural? (38, 39.) What four proofs from history does he adduce in support of his proposition? (29.) State Macaulay's judgment of the respective merits of Milton and Æschylus in the representation of divine beings. (43.)

What elements of Milton's character does Macaulay find exhibited in his writings? (44, 49.) What in his life? (88-90.) In what ways does he color the facts of Milton's life to suit his literary purposes? (46, 93.) How does he regard Milton's services to the general cause of human liberty? (83.) How does Macaulay explain and minimize the excesses attendant upon a forcible revolution? (60-70.) What lesson would he have statesmen draw from these excesses? (68, 71.)

EXPLANATORY INDEX.

- Academy:** The Académie Française was founded in 1635, when Cardinal Richelieu transformed an existing organization of poets into a national institution created for the purpose of securing in the French language the qualities of purity, richness, and refinement. To carry out this purpose it pledged itself to compile a dictionary and other technical works. In its capacity as final arbiter in questions of the disputed pronunciation, spelling, etc., of French words, it performs a public service for which no similar English body exists.
- Æneid:** a Latin epic poem by Virgil, treating of the adventures of Æneas, who (according to Virgil's narrative) fled from the sack of Troy and with a few ships sailed to Italy, landed near the Tiber, and after a long conquest with the native tribes of Rutulians laid the foundations of the Roman nation. As it is one of the two greatest epic poems of antiquity, its translation has been the favorite task of ambitious poets.
- Æschylus** (525-455 B.C.), the greatest of the Athenian dramatists, wrote tragedies on historical and mythological subjects, including the *Seven* (Argive chiefs) *against Thebes*; the trilogy of *Agamemnon* (*q.v.*), *Choëphori*, and *Eumenides*; and *Prometheus* (*q.v.*).
- Agag,** King of the Amalekites, after being taken prisoner in battle against the Israelites, was spared by King Saul, in direct disobedience to the command of Jehovah, but was hewed in pieces by the prophet Samuel. (1 Sam. xv. 33.)
- Agamemnon:** commander of the allied armies at the siege of Troy. On his return he was murdered by his wife, Clytemnestra, and her paramour, Ægisthus. This event is made the subject of a drama by Æschylus (*q.v.*).
- Aid:** a sum of money paid by a vassal to his monarch in fulfilment of certain feudal obligations.
- Amadis:** the hero of a prose romance that has been popular in Portuguese, Spanish, and French versions. His adventures exhibit him in the character of a poet, musician, gallant, knight-errant, and king.
- Aminta:** poem by Tasso (*q.v.*).
- Anathéma Maranátha:** accursed.
- Anthology:** The *Greek Anthology* is a collection of the most beautiful passages to be found in the works of the best Greek authors.

Arianism: adherence to the doctrines of Arius, an ecclesiastic of the fourth century, who taught that Christ was not co-equal or co-eternal with God, but was a finite being created by the fiat of the Deity. Although these doctrines were stigmatized as heretical by the Church of Rome at the Council of Nicea, in 325 A.D., and are contrary to the creed of the Church of England, they have claimed adherents in all periods of the history of Christianity.

Arimanes: see "Oromasdes."

Ariosto (1474-1533): an Italian poet and statesman. He lived at Ferrara, twenty-six miles northeast of Bologna, where he wrote his epic poem *Orlando Furioso*. This was intended as a companion poem to the *Orlando Innamorata* of Boiardo (*q.v.*). The subject of the former is the chivalrous exploits of Roland, nephew of Charlemagne, and its romantic character gives free play to those tendencies of the poet toward florid description to which Macaulay refers. (*See M.*, ¶ 47.)

Artegal: a knight in Spenser's allegorical poem of *The Faerie Queene* representing in the abstract the quality of justice, and in the concrete Lord Grey of Wilton, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The goddess of justice, says Spenser, presented Artegal with an attendant, a man of iron named Talus, —

"Who in his hand an yron flale did hould,
With which he thresht out falshood, and did truth unfould."

Attic Dramatists: Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides (*q.v.*).

Augustan Age: An age in the history of any country made remarkable by the excellence of the literature produced therein is likely to be called the Augustan Age of that country, because it holds a place in its general history like that which the age of Augustus Cæsar (42 B.C.—14 A.D.) holds in Roman history. During his reign epic and lyric poetry and history all attained a high degree of excellence in the works of Virgil, Horace, and Livy.

Aurora was goddess of the Dawn, and therefore her face is represented as flushed with rosy light.

Auto da fe: the ceremony of executing a judgment of the Inquisition by which a heretic had been condemned to be burned. The phrase means "Act of faith."

Bassanio: a character in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, whose right to marry the lady he loves depends upon his selecting from three caskets, one golden, one silver, and one leaden, that one which contains the lady's picture.

The inscription on the golden one promises him "what many men desire," but contains a symbol of Death, desired by the wretched.

The second offers "what he deserves," and encloses the image of a "blinking idiot," such as those lovers deserve who lack humility.

Belial: that one of the fallen angels depicted by Milton in *Paradise Lost* who was distinguished for slothfulness, guile, and love of evil for its own sake. Macaulay seems to have deemed Charles II. worthy to be called by this name.

Bishops, the persecution of: *see* p. xxv.

Bolivar, Simon (1783-1830): the patriot who led the Spanish colonies of South America, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, New Granada, in their successful revolts against the Spanish rule, between 1810 and 1824. He was therefore called the Washington of South America.

Bottom: a character in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. He was an Athenian weaver, whose head was transformed into that of an ass through the magic arts of the mischievous fairy Puck. While Bottom was in this condition, Puck caused Titania, queen of the fairies, to fall in love with him under the delusion that he was beautiful. (*See* M. N. D., III, 1.)

Boyer, Battle of (July 1, 1690): the battle which, by the defeat of James II., gave to William III. the mastery of Ireland.

Brissotines: the party of French Revolutionists commonly known as the "Girondists." Although opponents of the Monarchy, they stood as champions of law, order, and justice against the excesses of the extreme "Terrorists."

Burke, Edmund (1729-1797): English orator and statesman. In his speeches upon the relations between England and her American colonies, upon the crimes committed by Warren Hastings in India, and upon the French Revolution, he proved himself to be a consummate master of sustained and impassioned oratory.

Byron, George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824): an English poet, whose great genius was marred by an excessive egotism, a morbid taste for the melodramatic, and a defective moral sense. His *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, and his tragedies, *Manfred*, *Cain*, *Marino Faliero*, *Sardanapalus*, are, as Macaulay intimates, merely studies of a single type of character, that of a brilliant but blighted genius. After having forfeited by his excesses and erratic conduct the respect of society in England, Byron became a voluntary exile, and spent the latter part of his life on the continent, a melancholy and disappointed man. The hero of his *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, who is represented as undergoing a similar experience, has been supposed by many to be a remote picture of himself.

Capuchins: the nickname given to the Franciscan Order of Monks; so named from the small hood (capuchon) which formed a distinctive portion of their dress.

- Cassim Baba**: a brother of Ali Baba (hero of a tale in the Arabian Night's Entertainments). Ali has discovered the mystic formula ("Open, sesame!"), the utterance of which causes the door of the treasure-house of the Forty Thieves to open. His brother, forgetting the name of the grain, vainly calls, "Open barley! Open wheat!"
- Circe**: an enchantress of ancient mythology, who was fabled to dwell on an island in the Mediterranean, near Italy. She offered to her victims a magic potion which transformed those who drank it into swine. Ulysses, a Greek hero, however, received from the god Hermes an herb which formed an antidote to the drug. Circe's promontory is the promontory of Circeii, in Latium, now called Monte Circello. Since at a distance it appears like an island, tradition has identified it with the island mentioned above.
- Clarendon** (1608-1674): Edward Hyde, Lord Clarendon, was a leading statesman of the Restoration (*see* p. xxi). He wrote a *History of the Great Rebellion*, notable for its graphic anecdotes, its keen analysis of motives, and its masterly portraiture of character.
- Collects**: brief, comprehensive prayers, forming a part of a liturgy, where they are distinguished from the prayers framed for specific occasions or appealing for specific blessings.
- Cowley, Dr. Abraham** (1618-1667): an English minor poet, author of many poems exhibiting considerable ability, but weighed down with uninteresting matter. They include many odes and one epic, the *Davideis*.
- Dante** (1265-1321) was the greatest Italian poet. His chief work was *The Divine Comedy*, an epic poem in three parts, the *Inferno*, the *Purgatorio*, and the *Paradiso*, which treat respectively of the penalties of sin, the process of purification from sin, and the state of the redeemed in heaven.
- De Montfort**: *see* Montfort.
- Denham, Sir John** (1615-1659): author of several poems that won high praise from Dryden, Johnson, and other poets of the last two centuries, notably the *Elegy on Cowley*.
- Dissenters**: *see* p. xvii.
- Divine Comedy**: *see* Dante.
- Dominic** (1170-1221): founder of the Order of Dominican Monks, or "Preaching Friars." He was a religious enthusiast of great piety and learning, but his record is stained by the fanaticism and cruelty he displayed in searching out and punishing heresy.
- Don Juan**, a brilliant, fascinating, but unscrupulous man of the world, is a character that seems to appeal to literary artists. Byron's presentation of it in the poem of that name is the most elaborate. Macaulay's reference is to an event in Mozart's opera of *Don Giovanni*.
- Dryden, John** (1631-1700), Poet Laureate of England, was the acknowl-

edged head of English men of letters in the generation that followed Milton. He gave shape to the new literary movement towards scrupulous perfection of technique (due to the influence of the French school of Corneille, Racine, and Boileau) that culminated in the work of Pope and Addison. He was the author of the most brilliant satires in the language (*Absalom and Achitophel*, *MacFlecknoe*), of numerous religious and political poems (*Religio Laici*, *The Hind and the Panther*), and of many tragedies and translations. The latter included versions not only of works originally written in foreign tongues (e.g. *The Æneid*), but also of English works written in a form or style counter to the prevailing taste. His life was disturbed by reason of his attitude towards the political troubles of the time, but his literary supremacy was undisputed.

Among his attempts to "modernize" early works is included an opera called *The State of Innocence and Fall of Man*, based on *Paradise Lost*. For this attempt Milton had given the cynical permission, "Ay, you may tag my verses."

Duessa: In Edmund Spenser's Elizabethan epic, *The Faerie Queene*, the hero of the first book is the Red Cross Knight. The vile enchantress Duessa is journeying with a wicked knight, Sansfoy, and the Red Cross Knight slays and despoils Sansfoy, and carries off Duessa, in the belief that she is an injured maiden forcibly held captive by Sansfoy. He then overthrows Sansloy, brother of Sansfoy, but the latter is rescued by Duessa, who casts about him a "potent spell" and conveys him away.

Dunstan (924-988), Archbishop of Canterbury, was an able churchman and statesman, but he has been charged with employing unscrupulous measures in carrying out his plans.

Elwood, Thomas (1639-1713): a young Quaker who aided the blind poet, Milton, during the composition of the *Paradise Lost*, by reading to him such passages from the Latin authors as were needed in his work.

Escobar (1589-1669): a Spanish theologian, noted for his subtlety and casuistry in so interpreting the Scriptures and analyzing questions of ethics as to demonstrate the correctness of his own faith.

Euripides (480-406 B.C.): the latest of the trio of great Greek tragic dramatists (Sophocles, Æschylus, Euripides). He wrote about eighty dramas, of which the *Electra* is one; eighteen still exist. The phrase "Sad Electra's poet" is applied by Milton to Euripides in order to suggest the tender human pathos characteristic of all his tragedies. Macaulay claims that his skill as a playwright, displayed in the construction of a complex plot and exciting stage situations, sometimes led him to neglect other desirable elements of the dramatic technique.

Fable of the Bees : a satire in doggerel verse on the moral philosophy of Shaftesbury (*q.v.*), written by Bernard de Mandeville (1670-1733), an English author of Dutch parentage.

Faithful Shepherdess : a pastoral poem written by John Fletcher, an English dramatist (1576-1625), in imitation of the *Pastor Fido* of Guarini (*q.v.*).

Fifth-monarchy Men : One of the many sects which arose in England after the Reformation, through the diverse interpretation of special passages of the Scriptures, was that of the Fifth Monarchists. Seizing upon the *Prophecy of Daniel* as their oracle, they determined that the "four great monarchies" which the author of that book had predicted would dominate the earth, had existed in the Assyrian Monarchy of Nebuchadnezzar, the Persian of Cyrus, the Greek of Alexander, and the Holy Roman Empire. Then by ingenious computations they determined that the Fifth and last Monarchy therein predicted (*see* Dan. vii.) was now about to be established by the return of Jesus Christ to earth as its King, when he would deliver over the earth to his saints (including the Fifth-monarchy Men) to be ruled by them as his deputies. These sectaries, having intrigued to destroy Cromwell, were ruthlessly crushed by him.

Filicaja, Vincenzo (1642-1707) : a Florentine poet, author of brilliant patriotic odes and sonnets; but certainly *not* the greatest lyric poet of modern times, as asserted in ¶ 58 of the *Essay on Addison*.

Fleetwood, Charles (1620-1692) : son-in-law of Oliver Cromwell, an ardent Puritan, a leading general in the Parliamentary army during the Revolution against Charles I., commander-in-chief of the forces in Ireland during Cromwell's ascendancy, and after Cromwell's death the choice of the army for the command of the forces in England.

Frederick the Great (1712-1786), King of Prussia, was an ardent admirer of French culture, and sought in every way to foster it in Prussia. He composed several works in French, and encouraged Voltaire, Diderot, and other learned Frenchmen to take up their abode at his court.

Gallio : Roman consul at Corinth during the missionary visit of St. Paul to that city to preach Christianity. In the description of the tumult aroused by the teachings of Paul (Acts xviii. 17), Gallio is said by the historian to have "cared for none of these things." Hence his name has become symbolic of indifference to matters of grave import.

Genius : a spirit or deity attendant upon an individual and controlling his fortunes. The ancients attributed two, a good and a bad, to each person.

Gibbon, Edward (1737-1794) : author of a *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and a hostile critic of the Christian religion.

Goldsmith, Oliver (1728-1774), an Irish poet and man of letters, produced two fragmentary *Histories of England* compiled from earlier historians. He was in no sense a student of history, and the works, produced merely to earn a few shillings, were superficial and inaccurate.

Guarini (1537-1612), an Italian poet, won renown by his *Il Pastor Fido*, a poem in the pastoral style. It has grace and tenderness, but is artificial and has an excess of ornamentation.

Gulliver: see Swift.

Halifax, Charles Montague, Earl of (1661-1715): a Whig statesman, financier, and patron of letters. His devices for raising money for the wars of William III. led to the beginning of the English national debt, and to the establishment of the Bank of England. He was Chancellor of the Exchequer under William III., was out of power during the Tory ascendancy under Anne, and was restored to power only at her death. He served as Prime Minister from the accession of George I. until his own death in 1715.

Helvetius (1715-1771): a French philosopher, who (accepting Locke's theory that the mind is not an original source of ideas, but that every idea is the fruit of some bodily sensation) held that the sole logical rule of conduct must be to secure the most pleasant sensations possible.

Herodotus (fifth century B.C.): author of a *History of Greece* in nine books, covering the period from 700-479 B.C. It is of the greatest importance to students of ancient history, although of course Herodotus had no conception of the necessity of sifting and verifying alleged historical facts.

Hesperides: fabled gardens in the West, where grew the tree that bore apples of gold.

Hume, David (1711-1776), philosopher and historian, was the first writer who ever attempted to treat English history in such a way as to trace the causes that have determined its course. His *History of England*, although brilliant, is biassed by his Tory political views, and by his hostility to the Christian religion.

Hutchinson, Mrs. Lucy, was the wife of Colonel John Hutchinson (1616-1664), a leader in the Puritan struggle against Charles I. His wife shared his experiences in field and prison, and wrote a volume of *Memories*, which gives an accurate and clear account of the military and political affairs of the period.

Iago: a villanous character in Shakespeare's drama of *Othello*, and one of the great dramatist's most profound and masterly character delineations.

Iliad: an epic poem attributed to Homer (about 1000 B.C.), treating of the last part of the Trojan War.

Independents: see p. xviii.

Infanta Catharine: the daughter of King John II. of Portugal, married to Charles Stuart (afterwards King Charles II. of England).

Instrument of Government: see p. xxi.

Jacobites: the name applied to the adherents of the exiled Stuarts.

Jefferies,¹ **George, Baron** (1648-1689): Chief Justice of England under Charles II. and James II. In his discharge of the duties of this office he was so arbitrary, so bloodthirsty, and so corrupt, that his name is held in universal detestation. These qualities were especially conspicuous in the circuit which he made for the trial of the participants in Monmouth's Rebellion. (See pp. xxiv, xxv.)

Johnson, Samuel (1709-1783), was a great lexicographer, essayist, critic, and conversationalist, but not a great dramatist. A defect common to all his writings, due in part to his vast classical erudition, is his preference for polysyllabic words, and for stately periodic sentences imitated from Latin models.

His *Lives of the Poets* contain biographical and critical studies of English poets from Cowley to Gray, including Milton, Dryden, Pope, Addison, and Swift. His tragedy of *Irene* (1749), although it had the support of Garrick, was withdrawn from the stage after a run of only nine days. His story of *Rasselas*, written under stress of poverty to obtain funds for the burial of his mother, relates how Prince Rasselas was confined in a valley in Abyssinia, called "The Happy Valley," in order to remove him from any possible share in the miseries that swarm in the world. The "ingenious philosopher" referred to by Macaulay in the *Essay on Addison*, ¶ 26, proposed to Rasselas to escape by means of a flying machine, but his first attempt to demonstrate the art of flying proved a disastrous failure.

Klopstock (1724-1803): the author of a German epic poem, *The Messiah*, of Biblical odes, and of patriotic dramas. He was the forerunner of the German romantic school of impassioned poetry, of which Schiller was the chief exponent.

Laud, William, Archbishop of Canterbury (1573-1645), was the champion of the doctrine of absolutism in Church and State, a doctrine which both he and his sovereign (Charles I.) defended at the cost of their lives. Laud was charged with desiring to "Romanize" the Church of England, a charge to which his advocacy of ritualism, of the practice of confession, and of the doctrine of the celibacy of the clergy, gave support. He was supported by the king in forcing his views upon the Church in England and in Scotland. He was im-

¹ This is Macaulay's spelling of the name in the *Essay*. The Chief Justice himself spelled it in various ways, but after being raised to the peerage adhered to the spelling "Jeffreys," the form employed in his "letters patent." This latter is the form employed by Macaulay in his *History*.

peached for treason by the Long Parliament (*see* p. xx), and was beheaded.

Lear: one of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies, dealing with an early king of the Britons, who was driven into insanity by the unfilial cruelty of his children.

Ludlow, Edmund (1620-1693): an unreconcilable antagonist of the Early Stuart monarchy (*see* p. xviii), and the author of a volume of *Memoirs of Cromwell*, valuable because of the honesty of temper in which they were composed. Carlyle speaks of "that solid but wooden head of his."

Lycidas: a pastoral poem written by Milton to express his grief for the death of his friend, Edward King. The name, from the Greek original meaning the "white" or "pure-souled one," is a favorite one with pastoral poets, appearing first in the seventh Idyll of Theocritus (*q.v.*).

Macaulay, Catherine (1733-1791): the author of a *History of England* covering the reign of the Stuarts, "more distinguished by zeal than by candor or skill."

Mackintosh, Sir James (1765-1832): author of a *History of the Revolution of 1688*. (*See* Macaulay's *Essay* on his *History*.)

Mandeville: *see* "Fable of the Bees."

Marcet, Mrs. Jane (1769-1858): the author of elementary treatises on political economy, chemistry, and physics.

Masque: a type of dramatic production that originated in Italy during the Renaissance. It was characterized by the combination in one play of spectacular scenic effects, music (vocal and instrumental), dancing, mythological and classical ornament, etc. (*See* Introduction to *Comus*, in *Milton's Minor Poems*. D. C. H. & Co.)

May, Thomas (1594-1650), Secretary and Historiographer to the Long Parliament (*see* p. xx), was commissioned to produce a *History of the Parliament of England*. The portion covering the period from 1640-1643 was printed in 1647, before the Civil War was ended, and as May died in 1650 the work lacks completeness.

Millennial year: the period when, according to ancient prophecy, the kingdom of Christ shall be established and exert unbroken sway over the entire earth. (*See* "Fifth-monarchy Men.")

Milton, John (1608-1674): for life *see* p. xxvii. For works *see* p. xxix+.

Moloch: the most fierce and reckless of the devils described in Milton's *Paradise Lost* as having forfeited heaven by their rebellion against God.

Montague, Charles: *see* Halifax.

Montfort, Simon de (1200-1265): leader of the English barons in their struggle against the tyranny of their feudal head, Henry III. De Montfort was the earliest champion of the representation of the Commons in the government.

Newton, Sir Isaac (1642-1727) : the world's most profound and original scientific investigator, who gave to the world the theory of gravitation. He was also one of the most gifted mathematicians in an age when great mathematicians abounded. He was Professor of Mathematics in Cambridge University, and President of the Royal Society.

Niobe : a character in Greek mythology, who mourned so incessantly for the death of all her children that the gods, in pity, turned her to stone. The legend furnishes a favorite subject for artists.

Oldmixon, John (1673-1743) : author of *Histories of England, Scotland, Ireland, and America*, for the dulness of which he was attacked by Pope in the *Dunciad* as a perverter of history.

Oromasdes and Arimanes : the names of the "principles (or deities) of good and evil" of the Parsee religion. Later forms of the names are Ormuzd and Ahriman.

Osiris : the chief Egyptian god, offspring of Heaven and Earth. His temple was at Memphis.

Othello, the central figure in the tragedy of that name, strangles his wife because of his conviction that she is unfaithful to him, yet first dwells with tenderest emotion on the beauty and the sweetness that had won his love.

"O balmy breath, that does almost persuade
Justice to break her sword, . . .
Be thus when thou art dead and I will kill thee
And love thee after."—Act V. Sc. ii.

Parliament, The Long. See p. xx.

Petition of Right : see p. xix.

Petrarch (1304-1374) : an Italian poet and historian of high rank. His compositions of most abiding interest are a series of love poems (sonnets and songs) addressed to "Laura," on whom he has conferred an immortality only less secure than that conferred by Dante upon "Beatrice" in the *Divine Comedy*.

Pindar : a Greek poet of the fifth century B.C. He is called the "Theban Eagle" because of the soaring imagination and spirit exhibited in his triumphal *Odes*, the only complete examples of his work extant.

Plato (427-347 B.C.) : the greatest Athenian philosopher.

Plutarch (66-120) : the author of a series of *Parallel Lives*, biographical sketches in Greek, treating of twenty-three Greek and twenty-three Roman public characters. These biographies, alike because of their historical and their literary value, have always been eagerly read by students.

Popish Trials : see p. xxiii.

Presbyterians : see p. xviii.

- Prometheus**: In Æschylus' tragedy of *Prometheus Vinctus*, Prometheus is a minor deity who has incurred the anger of Zeus by daring to stand forth as the champion of the human race against his tyranny. He is first punished by being chained to a rock in Scythia, and on his continued resistance to the will of Zeus is hurled by a thunderbolt into Tartarus. Later he is chained to Mount Caucasus, and is tortured by an eagle that daily rends his flesh.
- Quintilian** (42-118 A.D.): the most celebrated teacher of rhetoric in ancient Rome; author of a work on *Rhetoric* in twelve books.
- Rabbinical literature** was the literature created by the Jewish expounders of the Law of Moses, and contained many mystical doctrines.
- Rhapsodists**: bards who made a profession of memorizing and reciting episodes from the works of Homer.
- Rotherhithe**: a district of London frequented by seafaring people.
- Roundheads**: a derisive epithet applied to those Puritans who wore their hair cropped close as a protest against the fashionable manner of dressing the hair adopted by the gallants at the court.
- Round Table**: a traditional expression for the body of knights organized by the legendary British King Arthur (sixth century) into a fraternity for the purpose of defending chastity, loyalty, honor, law, and order within his realm.
- Rye-house Plot**: *see* p. xxv.
- Salmasius** (1588-1658): an erudite scholar and jurist, probably best known through his controversy with Milton in regard to the defensibility of the execution of Charles I. (*see* p. xx). He was employed by the exiled son of Charles to write a *Defense of the King*, which proved to be a farrago of scurrilities. To this, at the request of Parliament, Milton responded with his *Defense of the English People*, although convinced that the labor of preparing it would complete the threatened ruin of his eyesight. Salmasius returned to the attack, and Milton replied with a *Second Defense*.
- Seals**: Royal proclamations and other official documents of the British government are valid only when they have been sealed with a certain seal (depending on the character of the document). These seals are placed in the custody of special officers, who are responsible for their proper use. At a time when the monarch's will was paramount, as in the reign of Henry VIII., no custodian would venture to refuse to seal a royal document; but after the Privy Council had asserted itself as a champion of the rights of the English people against the aggressions of the Crown, an officer, supported by its authority, might venture to refuse the seal to a royal edict that was obviously tyrannical.
- Shaftesbury, Ashley Cooper, Earl of** (1621-1683): *see* p. xxiii +.

Shaftesbury, Anthony, Third Earl of (1671-1713), was an indifferent philosopher. In his *Characteristics of Man, Manners, and Opinions* he elaborated a system of philosophy based on three propositions; that ridicule is the test of truth, that men possess an innate moral sense, and that "Whatever is, is best." This system corresponds closely to that expounded in Pope's philosophical poem, the *Essay on Man*, although that poem is commonly supposed to give expression to Bolingbroke's metaphysical speculations. The theory of an "innate moral sense" is opposed, in philosophy, to the theory that ideas of right and wrong arise wholly from man's experience of what is beneficial or harmful to himself.

Ship Money: see p. xx.

Shrewsbury, Charles Talbot, Duke of (1660-1718), was a leading statesman during the reigns of William III., Anne, and George I. He played a prominent part in securing the accession of the Hanoverians and was made Lord High Treasurer by George I.

Skinner, Cyriac, was a pupil of Milton, and to him were addressed two of Milton's finest sonnets, Nos. xi. and xvii.

Somers, John, Lord Somers (1652-1716), was the leader, official or unofficial, of the Whig party during the reigns of William III. and Anne. Indeed, he was a leader in the events that gave rise to that party; for he acted as counsel for the defence in the trial of the seven bishops (see p. xxv), and was chairman of the committee appointed to frame the immortal *Declaration of Right* (see p. xxvi). He was appointed Attorney-general, then Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and later Lord High Chancellor, by William III. His impeachment by his Tory enemies, in 1701, although unsuccessful, forced him thereafter to maintain a subordinate position until his death, except during the two years of Whig supremacy (1708-1710), when he was Lord President of the Council.

Macaulay evinces marked admiration for his character, distinguished as it was for directness and adherence to principle in an age of tortuous statecraft and time-serving politicians.

Sophocles (496-405 B.C.): a tragic poet of Athens, the rival of Æschylus (*q.v.*); author of *Antigone*, *Ajax*, *Œdipus Tyrannus*, and other plays, all notable for their mastery over dramatic situations, their character delineation, and their pathos.

Star Chamber: a court composed of a committee of the Privy Council and two chief justices, that, by the exercise of extraordinary power unknown to law courts, proved a suitable instrument for the tyranny of Charles I.

Strafford, Thomas Wentworth, Earl of (1593-1641): the chief minister of Charles I., was with Laud (*q.v.*) an upholder of that principle of absolute government in Church and State for which the Stuarts

contended (*see* p. xix). Wentworth was impeached of high treason and sent to the block, eight years before the king, his master, suffered a similar fate.

Sumner, Charles R. (1790-1874), was made Bishop of Winchester two years after his work in translating and editing the manuscript of Milton's essay on *Christian Doctrine*.

Swift, Jonathan, Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin (1667-1745), was celebrated as a churchman, politician, and man of letters. His great genius was employed chiefly in a battle against the hard conditions of his life, against the dishonesty and selfishness of the society amid which he moved, and against the political opponents that he hated. He was given a poor ecclesiastical office in Dublin, far removed from all the intellectual companionships in London that he esteemed the "ornament of life." In Ireland, as in England, he devoted his energies to the righting of public wrongs, and here, too, he composed that greatest of satires, *Gulliver's Travels*, in which he attacked the greatest and the meanest vices of mankind in a spirit of bitter indignation at the degradation which they disclose in the human race.

In this romance an Englishman named Lemuel Gulliver visits many strange regions, among them the flying island of Laputa, a country inhabited by a race of philosophers. The natives are so strongly inclined to reflection that they would be wholly oblivious to the outer world were it not for attendants who recall their wandering thoughts by flapping their faces with an inflated bladder.

Tasso, Torquato (1544-1595) : the third in the trio of Italian epic poets of the first rank. (Dante, fourteenth century; Ariosto, fifteenth century; Tasso, sixteenth century.) His most celebrated works are the pastoral poem of *Aminta*, and the epic *Jerusalem Delivered*. The latter treats of the victories that marked the "First Crusade for the Holy Sepulchre." It was criticised as exhibiting too little historical accuracy and too little regard for the conventional rules of epic composition, and as dwelling too much upon profane matters, to the ignoring of the religious side of the crusade. Tasso therefore recast it as *Jerusalem Captured*.

Theocritus (third century B.C.), by the production of his *Idylls* (i.e. *Scenes from Country Life*), became the creator of the type of pastoral poetry.

Thomas, called Didymus, was a disciple of Jesus Christ. After the execution of Christ, Thomas was unable to believe in his resurrection from the dead without tangible proof; the name "doubting Thomas" is therefore given to the class of persons who find doubt more easy than belief. (*See* Gospel of St. John xx. 24.)

Thyrsis : the name taken by an angel in the *Masque of Comus*, when,

having been sent by God to guard the heroine of the play from evil, he disguised himself as a shepherd in order to escape attention.

Toland, John (1669-1722): author of many controversial religious works, and of a *Life of Milton* published in 1698.

Tyburn: a hill west of the old city of London, on which malefactors were formerly hanged. After the Restoration, the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw were taken from their tombs in Westminster Abbey and hanged at Tyburn to satisfy the desire of the Royalists for revenge.

Vandyke dress: Sir Anthony Van Dyck was the Court painter of Charles I., and his portraits of the king and of his courtiers have won such celebrity that the type of costume in which he habitually posed his subjects has received the appellation of the "Vandyke" costume. For illustration see page 44.

Vane, Sir Henry (1612-1662): a champion of the Parliamentary cause in the struggle against the tyranny of Charles I. In politics he was a republican, in religion a Fifth Monarchist (*q.v.*).

Walpole, Robert, Lord Orford (1676-1745), was the greatest Whig statesman of his time. He was Secretary, first of War, and then of the Navy, under Anne, but was disgraced by the triumphant Tories in 1712. His power under the Hanoverian monarchs, at first weak, rapidly approached absolutism, although he had such antagonists as Bolingbroke and Swift to combat. He was at various times a Privy Councillor, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Paymaster-general, and Lord Treasurer. Finding his influence waning as Pitt forced himself into notice, Walpole resigned his offices in 1742, accepted a peerage, and retired to private life.

Whig: see p. xxv.

Whitefriars: a district west of the old city of London, which, under the name of "Alsatia," was long a place of refuge for thieves and outlaws of every description. These herded there in such numbers that it was unsafe for officers of the law to enter the district.

Wood, Anthony (1632-1695): an antiquarian who devoted most of his life to researches in the history of Oxford University, including the lives of its eminent alumni.

Wotton, Sir Henry (1568-1639): a diplomatist, scholar, and educator. He befriended John Milton, not only by his stimulating praise of the somewhat immature *Comus*, but also by aiding him in making his foreign tour both pleasant and profitable.

Xeres: a river in Spain, flowing through a district renowned for its production of "Sherry" wines.

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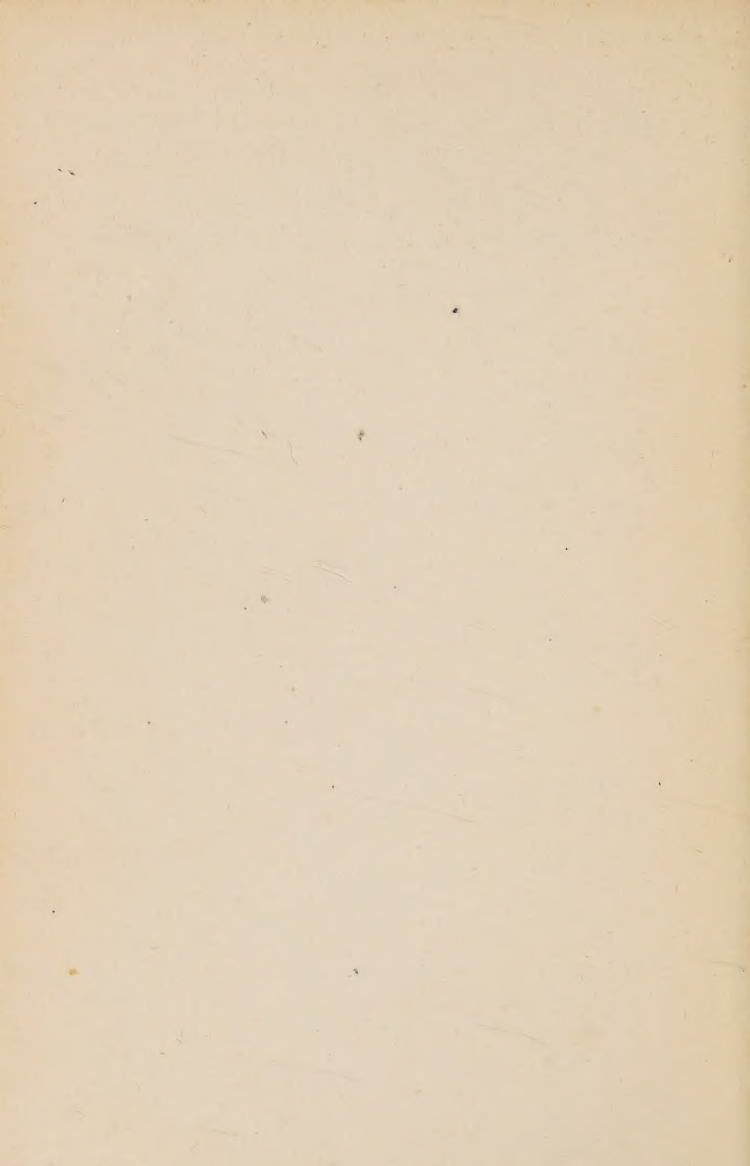
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